THINGS SEEN

G. W. STEEVENS.

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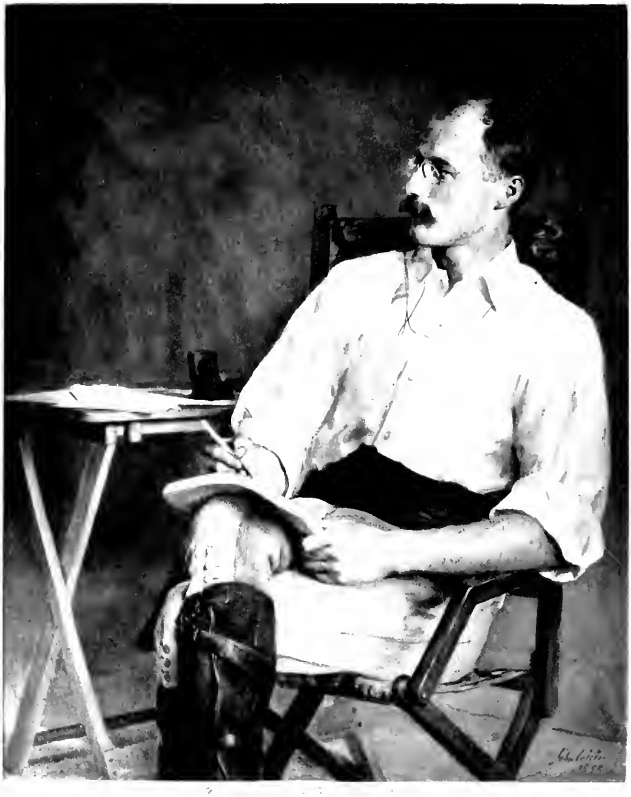

G. W. Steevens

THINGS SEEN

IMPRESSIONS OF MEN, CITIES, AND BOOKS

BY

G. W. STEEVENS

SELECTED AND EDITED BY
G. S. STREET

WITH A MEMOIR BY
W. E. HENLEY

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G. W. S.

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We cheered you forth—brilliant and kind and brave.
Under your country's triumphing flag you fell.
It floats, true heart, over no dearer grave.
Brave and brilliant and kind, hail and farewell!

W. E. H.

CONTENTS

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF THE AUTHOR

THE NEW HUMANITARIANISM

FROM THE NEW GIBBON

WHAT HAPPENED IN THESSALY

THE MONOTYPE

MR. BALFOUR'S PHILOSOPHY

"LITTLE EYOLF"

ZOLA

THE NEW TENNYSON

WORDS FOR MUSIC

THE FUTILE DON

AT TWENTY-FOUR

A FABLE OF JOURNALISTS

THE DREYFUS CASE—

I. SCENES AND ACTORS IN THE TRIAL

II. THE EFFECT ON FRANCE

CONTENTS

THE JUBILEE—

I. LONDON'S NEW GAME

II. QUEEN AND EMPIRE

III. "TO VIEW THE ILLUMINATIONS"

IV. THE GREAT REVIEW

V. THE GREAT REVIEW—continued

THE FEAST OF ST. WAGNER—I, II, III

IN SEARCH OF A FAMINE—I, II, III, IV

"DURING HER MAJESTY'S PLEASURE"—I, II

IN THE COUNTRY OF THE STORM

THE DERBY—I, II

THE CESAREWITCH

TWO HOSPITALS—

I. OUT-PATIENTS' DAY

II. IN THE THEATRE

APPENDIX

MEMOIR.

Through war and pestilence, red siege and fire,
Silent and self-contained he drew his breath;
Brave, not for show of courage—his desire
Truth, as he saw it, even to the death.

—Rudyard Kipling.

The great necessity imposed upon our England by the policy of the Afrikanders inside and out of Cape Colony has cost us many precious lives. I speak for my own set, and with no better outlook than the rest over the many hundreds of brave and brilliant and beautiful creatures who, at the especial instance of the mad and criminal old man at Pretoria, have chosen rather to surrender this good earth, and all that she gifts her children withal, than to suffer that an insolent and monstrous wrong were done upon that piece of her to whose inheritance, in all its felicity of pride and freedom, they were born. But I do not think that I speak excessively when I say that, when George Steevens died at Ladysmith, of enteric fever (which is, being translated, filth and low living), there was lost in him as fine a spirit, as rare and as completely trained a brain, and as brave a heart, as we had to show. I write after Kimberley, Paardeberg, Pieter's Hill, Bloemfontein, Kroonstadt, with Mafeking rewarded for her bril-

liant and heroic feat of arms, with what was the Orange Free State British territory, and with Lord Roberts knocking dreadfully at the heart of the Transvaal Republic; and I cannot choose but reflect upon the fact that these victorious feats all come to me the less triumphingly for that his part in them is *not*. He had many friends, so that in this I am by no means singular; and our consolation is that he was so good an Englishman that, were it now possible, he would be the first to rebuke us for our cowardice.

I.

I have called this note a "Memoir"; but, in plain English, no memoir of him is possible. The story of his life consists in his school successes and in his books; and, apart from these, there is little or nothing to record. Does it, for instance, advance our knowledge of him so very much to record that he came of good, sound, middle-class stock, was born in a London suburb,[1] and could read with a good appreciation of facts, at three to four years old? It has all to be said, I suppose; yet it isn't very interesting—surely? I gather, however, that, for all his precocity, he was that best of good things—a true child: which is as much as to say that he ended as he began, with "that child's heart within the man's"

[1] His speech bewrayed him till the end. It may be that "Il n'est bon bec que de Paris" is true of Chaucer's town as it was of Villon's. If it be, then George Steevens's accent was the best in England.

an unending refreshment to him, and an unfailing joy to all the rightly constituted children whom he met.[1] In the beginning he ruled the roast; for one of his joys was an atlas, and when anybody got to anywhere in the illustrated papers, then he and his brothers and sisters also had to get there—in a packing-case for a ship, and with lots of information from the skipper as to the habits and customs of the natives, the longitude and latitude of the port of destination, the mineral, vegetable, and zoological features of the region, and all the rest of it. Presently he went to school, and in no great while he developed into a prize boy, and so into a prize student—an exhibitioner—a prodigy (even)—a don of as few years as a don may have and be real.

But he never lost (so I am told) his interest in "larks," whether informative or not. And his simplicity, his soundness of heart, his integrity of mind remained until the end of things unaltered and unalterable. So they tell me who knew him best in the early days. So they tell me who knew him afterwards, when he was no longer a kind of champion pot-hunter, but a man cut loose from his moorings and sent adrift on the sea of life and time and experience, there to play his game and approve

[1] In the early days of our acquaintance he came to lunch with us. He was silent and shy, but he could not escape the eye of the serenest and sincerest thing that ever lived; and in the course of the afternoon she proposed to him, and he was finally taken into her exquisite and beautiful little life.

himself. So I found him, and, as I have said, so he was found by a better—an infinitely better—judge than I. The truth is, I take it, that in George Steevens the character was even greater than the intelligence. He might have been the most brilliant and the most wonderful portent ever turned out of the Academies, and yet have been a "bounder" (there is no other word, so I must use the only word there is), or a pedant, or a pedant and a "bounder" both. But honesty, a radiant sincerity, straightness of mind and temper and tongue—these were George Steevens. That he had brains and accomplishment is not much to the point. The point is that he had character: a nature sweet yet strong, the finer instincts finely touched, so that he was beloved of children in his life, and in his death may neither be forgotten nor replaced among his friends.

II.

In the beginning he went to a private teacher's, but at thirteen (1882) he won his way into the City of London School, and there he proceeded to distinguish himself as none had done before him. Prize after prize he took, medal after medal,[1] till in

[1] Four silver medals, and a (special) gold one. Here, from the School Magazine, is a list of his honours: "Leaving out of account numerous prizes and medals, his school and academic distinctions were as follows: Sassoon Entrance Scholarship, 1882; Carpenter Scholarship, 1885; Captain of the School, 1887; Classical Scholarship at Balliol College, Oxford, 1887; Sassoon Sanskrit Exhibition,

1887, being captain of the school, he took the Classical Scholarship at Balliol, and, having done so, proceeded to distinguish himself yet more, till he came to be known as "the Balliol prodigy." Not being a 'Varsity man (as they say), I cannot appreciate his triumphs as, being the writer of this Memoir, I ought, no doubt, to do. But the list of them is striking; and I have marvelled more than once, and been not alone in my marvelling, over the quality of his intelligence, which survived them all, and, more than that, came to the world's work perfectly accomplished, yet vigorous, apprehensive, athletic even, as could be.[1] He might, I always felt, have won his way from pot to pot, from prize

City of London School, 1888; Abbott Scholarship, City of London School, 1888; Proxime accessit for Hertford University Scholarship (Oxford), 1888; Honourably mentioned for Ireland Scholarship (Oxford), 1888; First in honours at Matriculation Examination (London University), 1889; First Class in Classical Moderations (Oxford), 1890; Exhibition in Classics in Intermediate Examination (London University), 1889; Scholarship in Classics at B. A. Examination (London University), 1890; First Class in Final Classical School (Oxford), 1892; Fellow of Pembroke College, Oxford, 1893."

[1] "The mere quantity of his knowledge was astonishing; his command over it was still more so. He had a Napoleonic faculty for instantaneous and complete concentration of his intellectual forces."—B. A. Abrahams, in the 'City of London School Magazine,' March, 1900. That is most true. He was so complete master of his equipment and his means alike, that, as another school friend has recorded, he wrote his 'Monologues' with a running pen, and scarce ever a reference to the authorities shelved at his back.

to prize, and then, his mind exhausted with the work of assimilation, have quietly declined upon a curacy, or a grammar-school mastership, or a tutor's place in his college: capable of living interest in nothing excepting drinks and the minor niceties, the riddles and cruces, of classical scholarship. But he did nothing of the kind. On the contrary, he came out into the world, and, for aught one knew, he was not lettered at all, but only a type of Young Oxford: a youth with a *pince-nez* and a soft hat and a turn for Ibsen and Zola and all manner of extremes. I read of him that he was a capital speaker, with a vein of paradox and a bottoming of humour which kept him ever within the pale of reasonable unreasonableness; and I can very well believe it. Humour he had, and wit, and that excellently trained intelligence of his was excellently active and sane: only, being above all things wise, he did not, young as he was, essentially and despite his tremendous tutoring—he did not choose to begin his real life in too flagrant a humour of offence. I think he must needs have been a little tired, and indefatigable athlete as he'd shown himself, was glad of a rest, and content to lie by and take stock of things. Be this as it may, he left Oxford for Cambridge, and at Cambridge he wrote and edited the 'Cambridge Observer:' a journal very plainly modelled (but with improvements!) on an older 'Observer,' in which latter he was afterwards to print his one serious contribution to English letters. I have read his 'Cambridge Ob-

server' work, and it is enough that none of it has seemed worth reprinting in this volume either to my colleague, Mr. Street, or to myself. It showed, however, that there was somebody with a pen; and a result of it was that, Mr. Oscar Browning aiding, George Steevens joined the staff of the 'Pall Mall Gazette,' and now came out into the world indeed.

III.

He did so in a happy time. He was well and thrice well grounded in books; as ever, the golden chance was his, and he was to be well and thrice well grounded in affairs of men. A little before, there was nothing to be said about the 'Pall Mall Gazette' except that it had seen better days. A good thing in the beginning, it had gone on to be the most notorious journal in the world, and then, lighting upon evil and sober days, had fallen as low as a journal can, and live. Then, by a stroke of fortune as sudden and as dramatic, I think, as anything in the history of journalism, its estate was changed. It became the property of an American gentleman, Mr. William Waldorf Astor, who showed at once that he had wit and enterprise and *savoir-faire*, as well as money, by placing its control in the hands of a man who knew nothing whatever of journalism, but was, as was abundantly shown in the sequel, the most brilliant and daring Editor of his time. He was young, had read hard, had travelled far; knew all sorts and conditions of men; was

versed in all sorts and conditions of things; had a great sense of politics: with *prestance,* gaiety, position, a beautiful temperament. With never a touch of Fleet Street in his make, he was better than all Fleet Street put together at Fleet Street's own particular game; and to him, as to David in the Cave of Adullam, there flocked the younger and more daring spirits of whose aid he stood in need. One was George Warrington Steevens, and he came out of the experience a made man. They were all young men in the office of the 'Pall Mall Gazette.' Even the Assistant Editor, albeit the oldest in years, had in him the stuff of unending youth, and despite his great range of knowledge, his fine sense of political conduct, his serene, immitigable Toryism, had gaiety of heart enough, and wit and talk, and experience of the comedy of life and time and affairs enough, to be not much the elder of the youngest. Then the 'National Observer,' a journal which, as I've said elsewhere, is still remembered with affection and regret "by the chosen few who wrote for it and the chosen fewer who read it"—the 'National Observer,' I say, was still afoot, and though conscious of its moribundity—of the fact that in the midst of life we are in death—was keeping the bravest of fronts; and its young men were burning for new worlds to conquer. These new worlds, or an approach to them, they found in the 'Pall Mall Gazette,' as that ancient and battered print was refashioned and refitted, *te Teucro duce*: with Mr. Cust at the helm, and Mr. W. W. Astor,

in the guise of a favouring gale, at the prow. George Steevens came in with the rest. He was in the soft-hat-and-scarlet-tie stage of youthful manhood: a rather shy, a rather sulky or (so it seemed), a rather gloomy and socialistic junior don. So he appeared to me when at last I was privileged to make his acquaintance; so, I believe, he appeared to all the mariners in the new ship. But appearances were not long against him. I think he interested everbody from the first, and when he did so much as that, the sequel was inevitable. You started with a kindness for him, and you liked him, as you went on knowing him, better and better, more and more. And, believe me, it was a change and a chance for him. Hitherto he had been *primus inter pares*—a leader among boys. In the office of the 'Pall Mall Gazette' everybody, as I've said, was young; but he was the youngest of all, even as he was the only one who had not some salt of active life. Out of a past of books and prizes and debating societies and sentimental socialism, he came into an atmosphere of wit, and scholarship, and laughter, and sound Toryism, and the practice —the right practice—of affairs.[1] As I said, he was

[1] If he came to his work a philosophical Radical (whatever that may mean), he was very soon as good an Englishman as the best of his new-found yet unalterable friends. I have read somewhere that, in after years, he did but pretend to approve the reconquest of the Sudan, the reply to Mr. Kruger's declaration of war: that what he wrote about these matters was written to please the public, and in no sort represented his own convictions. As one who knew him very intimately, I can but say that I'll not

sulky and shy—or rather he was shy to the point of seeming sulky. But he soon endeared himself to every man in the place; at last his gift of humour got an irritant and an outlet both; at last his pretensions to ascendency, superiority, impeccability were subjected to a common and continuous test, and he was howled at if he did ill, as he was applauded if he did well. As his Editor, who loved and understood him, gave him all manner of opportunities, and turned him, all in the day's work, now on to the writing of flippant paragraphs, now on to the conduct of a matter in dispute which might have embroiled two kingdoms, but in which his sound yet brilliant handling of maps and texts and facts was sure to keep the journal "right side up," and "with a lot to spare,"[1] he came in for a great deal of both execration and applause. It was, as I believe, the making of him—it and, as I believe, the 'National Observer,' to which at this time he sent, from week to week, reviews which are models of their kind: reviews or scholarly or savage or merely blighting; and with these, and certain leaders and "middles" on matters of the moment, or on things in general, the several numbers of what must

believe it. He was too good an Englishman and too poor a hypocrite. That, despite his Toryism, he remained a philosophical Radical is like enough. I have yet to learn, in fact, that there is any very considerable difference between the several points of view.

[1] In those days the 'Pall Mall Gazette' was easily, not to say loosely, written. I find that I have relapsed upon the manner of it. So I keep the slang.

in the end be recognised as his sole achievement in pure literature. I mean, of course, those wonderful 'Monologues,'[2] in which, applying his reading and intelligence and humanity to the work of picturing and expressing the historical men and women of a bygone time, he recreated and renewed for us—brought as it were to our very doorsteps—figures and characters so diverse and remote as Troilus and Xantippe, Brutus the pedant and Commodus the madman, Vespasian, with his work-a-day views of empire, and Nero, Cicero, Alcibiades: the wonderful 'Augustus,' with its luminous and easy mastery of Roman politics at a time when Roman politics were at their cloudiest; and greatly daring, succeeded in suggesting even the mighty Caius Julius. It is when you come to think that these re-creations, these interpretings, these admirable and daring transfigurations (so to speak) of living Greece and Rome were done at four- or five-and-twenty, between spells of journalism, that you realise the great capacity George Steevens had, and the sort of man of letters he might and should have been. It seemed other to the Gods. But

[2] Monologues of the Dead. London: Methuen. 1895. Note that the method is, so far as it goes, on all fours with Shakespeare's. Steevens translates, or transliterates, his Greeks and Romans into the terms of the life he knew, and takes his lingo from the 'Sporting Times' if need be. What else does Shakespeare do in "Troilus," in "Antony," in "Coriolanus"? His Thersites alone suffices to show how very well his pupil had learned his lesson, and how brilliantly he put his learning out to use.

knowing not their minds, men may lament, as I do, that they who gave us thus much refused us more.

IV.

But Scripture saith, An ending! This peculiar set of circumstances was too good to last. Of the 'National Observer' there was presently left (1894) not much else than the aspect and the name, and not long afterwards not even these; and in the sequel (1895) the 'Pall Mall Gazette,' by the operation of a change as dramatic and as sudden as that which had resulted in its renascence, changed Editors and staffs once more, and, from being a power in the land, became once more an everyday evening journal. That Steevens did not instantly follow his friends into the vacancy of an enforced leisure was merely due, I believe, to the fact that he was working to the terms of an engagement. These fulfilled, he also went into retirement for a while; and, having married at the end of 1894, was content to lie low and be happy. At the same time, by way of keeping himself in touch with affairs, he proceeded to master and to say his say upon the question of the British Navy,[1] and to make himself welcome, as a man qualified to speak with *prestance* and authority on many things, to 'Blackwood.' Then (1896) came the second chance of his life (I except his marriage, which was a thing

[1] Naval Policy. By G. W. Steevens. London: Methuen. 1896.

apart from the ordinary courses of human life, and was in the event as fortunate as in the beginning it had seemed bewildering), and on the invitation of Mr. Alfred Harmsworth, a man of large and splendid inventions, he joined the staff of the 'Daily Mail:' a journal in whose service he was to develop a talent of a strange and taking brilliancy (its existence none had suspected in him), which was to give its chief, if not its sole, literary interest, to the work he rejoiced to do for it. He had shown, not once but many times, that he could *understand*. He was now to prove to admiration that he could both *understand* and *see*: that, given a figure, an aspect, an incident, even a great and notable passage in affairs, he could apply that admirable brain of his to the task of observing and realising what he saw, on lines so essential and so clean that, his faculty of speech thrown in, 'twas easy for him—almost too easy—to pass on the final effect of his vision. This is putting it badly enough, no doubt; and I do not know that it will make matters very much better to note that, at the time of his recording his impressions in the terms which made his fame, he stood alone among English journalists. To be sure, the capacity he showed was not now for the first time shown in English journalism. Dickens had exampled it, and that with "an immense and far-reaching instinct of the Picturesque" (I quote from memory, from Mr. Henry James); so had Ruskin; so had Meredith and R. L. Stevenson; so had Rudyard Kipling.

I do not think that Steevens was deeply read in any of these writers;[1] and that I do not think so is enough to show that I hold him better versed in Greek and Latin than he was in English. All the same, he was cut out of the same stuff with them: the peculiar capacity for vision and realisation, which was theirs, was his also; so that his 'Omdurman,' done amid the stinks and horrors of the field, is like to remain a classic—and a classic unsurpassed—for many years to come. He had a sort of visual grip of things: not reckless, nor haphazard, nor touched with sentiment; but alert, athletic, of an absolute and unalterable serenity. I am told (and I can very well believe) that a certain commander-in-chief, himself the hardest and sternest of communicants, has, on his own confession, been more than once indebted to George's despatches for essentials in his own. And I believe that my friend would never have lost this "visual grip," but would have gone on putting it to what purpose he chose in very different work: work

[1] He can scarce have seen Mr. Kipling's journalistic achievement; for this was made accessible only (1899) when he (Steevens) was shut up in Ladysmith. Mr. Kipling, too, is only one of several; for Dickens was, at the writing of his 'Uncommercial Traveller,' the most brilliant and commanding literary figure of his time; so that his 'Uncommercials,' though they were done for a weekly print (his own), were hardly journalism. A nearer parallel is Ruskin, whose 'Modern Painters' (to name no more of his works), though it hath ever existed as a book, is obviously mere journalism; stuff done to-day and forgot (of the writer) to-morrow.

other in scope, in practice, in design and in effect, than that which he did for the 'Daily Mail.' On that journal he had four years of active literary life. He began with New York and These States in general; he went on to tell how the Turk made hay of the Greek; he went to Egypt, and saw Sir Herbert triumph at the Atbara; he went to Egypt again, and, after Omdurman, passed to Khartum; he steamed east with Lord Curzon, and spread his big intelligence out over India under the British Raj; he went to South Africa, and there, having told us what he thought of things as he saw them in the desperate leaguer in which he lost himself—there, I say, he died. I need not pass these books[1] in review. I have, I think, stated their dominant literary quality. The presence of that quality made their author remarkable even to-day, when near everybody writes well, and some few write with distinction. And behind it, as, having known the 'Monologues' of old, and having been privileged to read, with other notes, as much as he did of his first essay in fiction, I can asseverate, without fear of repentance, that behind it all there was a fine romantic imagination: even as, behind that, there was a capacity for high politics, which, had he but

[1] (1) The Land of the Dollar. (Edinburgh: Blackwood, 1896.) (2) With the Conquering Turk. (Edinburgh: Blackwood, 1897.) (3) Egypt in 1898. (Edinburgh: Blackwood, 1898.) (4) With Kitchener to Khartum. (Edinburgh: Blackwood, 1898.) (5) In India. (Edinburgh: Blackwood, 1899.) (6) From Cape Town to Ladysmith. (Edinburgh: Blackwood, 1900.)

come out of Ladysmith, could not but have taken him far.

V.

The years of work and wandering that are represented by these books of his—these books, so vivid, so instant, so actual—these years, I say, did much for him. They took him far out into the world; they filled his brain with facts and impressions, and greatened the capacities of his vision and his heart. He did nothing in them but it increased his reputation, and enlarged his idea in the public fancy. He wrote for a round million, at least, of readers, and whatever he did for these was so well done that, when the million had found it good, he could appeal to the five thousand, or the five hundred, behind the million—even the five thousand, or the five hundred, who know—and count on their plaudits also. To his friends it was a great joy to see him thus conspicuous, and to know that all the while he was accomplishing himself, and through journalism making ready for the literature that in the long run was to be his sole employ. And his friends were fully justified of their content. They are few indeed, the youngsters, however brilliant and however promising—the one by no means includes the other—who have such golden chances as fell ready to his hand. To begin with, that triumphing metamorphosis, or avatar, of the 'Pall Mall Gazette': it was surely a distinction, as well as a right education,

almost from the first to live its full and vigorous and daring life, not as a thing outside but as an essential in its everyday economy. And then, the happiest of happy marriages achieved—the one woman found, and destiny to all appearances fulfilled—and then, I say, the experimental, novel, irresistible 'Daily Mail,' with its liberal and far-seeing Editor, and that gift of his in which were comprehended America, Greece, Egypt, the Sudan, India, with Rennes and Bayreuth, and such "pretty tiny kickshaws" thrown in by the way? What better fortune could one have wished for the child of one's own loins? The misfortune was that, as I and another held, it was incomplete so long as it did not include South Africa.[1] His opportunities had come hot-foot, each one hard at the other's heel. The old madman at Pretoria brought on this one also in, as it seemed, the nick of time, and, as we thought, to the notablest of purposes. And so it ended. He had a roving commission; and, being *fey* (for so I must think), he chose to shut himself up in Ladysmith. He might have gone whithersoever he would. But he would go nowhither else; and, having endured the leaguer until he got eaten up by the rust of it, as conducted by a parcel of folk who knew nothing about sieges, and were horribly afraid for their own skins, he took enteric fever—how, nobody knows—and came through it valiantly,

[1] The other, who has a rare political gift, insisted on China also. As I write, it is being borne in upon me that he was right; but my prescience never got thus far.

but died of it in the end—why, most can guess. 'Twas, as he said, a "side-ways ending to it all." But it sufficed. By it he went from us; and now he rests in Ladysmith cemetery, seven thousand miles or so from Merton, where his heart lay, and from London, where he had lived the best of his life—the best as well as the most; and he had centred his ambitions there, and knew that there lived his friends. Withal he died as it were in public: much as Stevenson had died in the days when he himself was breaking ground. And the effect of his bereavement was found more shocking than the effect of that great and famous writer's own: great and far-reaching as we know that to have been. 'Twas as though he had become a part of the things he had chronicled: he had identified himself so keenly and so intimately with the greatness of England that, reporter as he was, he had come—for England is greater than mere art—to be her chosen craftsman. In any case, no death that one can recall in letters has so moved the English-speaking world as his, since Dickens stumbled upon "the cold and starless road" full thirty years ago. Other and greater men have come and gone—have "one by one crept silently to rest"—in that long period of waste and growth, of increase and decay. But none had made himself known to such purpose and in such brief space as George Steevens, and of none could it be said, as was said of him, not once but many times:—

> "For Lycidas is dead, dead ere his prime,
> Young Lycidas, and hath not left his peer."

Lord Roberts, our "chief of men"; the famous captain whom he had followed to Khartum, *via* Atbara and Omdurman; the august lady, whose subject he was proud to call himself—these all went mourning for him; and with these all Ladysmith, where, in his high-hearted endeavour to "succour, help, and comfort all that were in danger, necessity, and tribulation," he had jested and smiled himself into the hearts of our sick and wounded, and had so borne himself under fire that the fighting men rejoiced to say that this was a man;[1] and with all Ladysmith a great part of the tremendous Empire to whose beginnings, as a right political unity, he was privileged to lend a hand.

VI.

He had, as I've said, an admirable brain, a brain of the first magnitude as brains go: withal, a brain accomplished to the full, yet never a hair the worse for its accomplishing. Of what I believe to have been its master-quality—I mean, imagination

[1] Says a correspondent:—"At Eland's Laagte, Tinta Nyani, and Lombard's Kop he was usually walking about, close to the firing line, leading his grey horse, a conspicuous mark for every bullet." And another (Lynch of the 'Illustrated London News'):—"I hope you will say this that G. W. Steevens was one of the very bravest men in Ladysmith. I don't suppose that any one here knows that at Eland's Laagte he went forward on horseback with the Highlanders, when every other man with a horse was dismounted."

—we have the first sprightly runnings in his unrivalled 'Monologues of the Dead'—a book, or I am mistaken, with a future; even as we have proof of other and lesser capacities in the several volumes of this Edition. But I do not think that any of these achievements in realisation and presentation show us anything of their Author's best. Of that there are not many traces in his printed work. Does a man's best ever get into his books? I do not think so; and I say that with some knowledge of literature and men, and the certainty that, if I could now meet Shakespeare, I should wonder why he had declined upon such stuff as "Hamlet" and "Macbeth." Brains apart, assuredly, the best of our dear George Steevens is not in his books. For one thing, he saw too easily, and wrote too brilliantly—he filled his Editor's bill too well; and for another, he had, I doubt not, too vigorous and lasting a sense of the virtue of privacy. And this brings me to my end. To realise George Steevens, you must put away everything but simplicity, kindness, sincerity. A serene and comely blending of these was so plain in him that you could see naught else. And, in fact, there was naught else to be seen. These were G. W. S., and he was ever these to his friends. "The rest is silence." W. E. H.

Worthing, May-June, 1900.

THINGS SEEN

THE NEW HUMANITARIANISM.[1]

In 1813 Elizabeth Fry, visiting Newgate, found women chained to the ground, lying in a dark cell, on straw changed once a week, clothed only in a petticoat, hardly visible for vermin. In 1897 a deer was impaled and killed during a run of the Royal Buckhounds. The epithets spattered over the latter fact by part of the public press in London would not have been at all inadequate as applied to the former. We read of "the terrible death of the deer," "the piteous story," the "brutal cruelties," "barbarities," and "atrocious incidents" of the hunt. Both Newgate and the Royal Buckhounds are public institutions, and the country is by way of being responsible for them. Yet Elizabeth Fry was held something of an eccentric for objecting to this form of the punishment of the guilty in Newgate; while there are certainly hundreds, perhaps thousands, of people in Britain who hardly find the abuse above quoted sufficient for the iniquities of the Buckhounds. Concrete instances like this show such a change of sentiment well within the span of the

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closing century as can only be called prodigious. We say provisionally a change of public sentiment, and not of public morality; for if it should turn out a question of morality, then we must conclude either that the contemporaries of Wellington and Peel were all devils or that the editor of the 'Star' is an angel.

The root of the revolution lies in the respective values which two generations set upon physical pain. You will see the same even more clearly by going back another couple of generations to the days of Tom Jones or Roderick Random. "Coarse" and "brutal" are the epithets which our age selects for theirs. But again the root of the difference lies in the importance our modern fashionable sentiment—shall we say "fashionable cant" at once and be out with it?—attaches to the avoidance of physical pain. Ensign Northerton was a brute in his day, and Tom Jones was a man; in ours Tom is a brute and the Ensign a demon. It may be the essence of civilisation or an accident of it; but all our Victorian sentiments, all our movements, all our humanitarianist talk, trend in one direction—towards the conviction that death and pain are the worst of evils, their elimination the most desirable of goods.

To many people—so fast are we soddening with that materialism which calls itself humanity—this proposition about death and pain and their antitheses will seem a truism. But perhaps some of them will falter in that belief when they see to what monstrosities this deification of painlessness can

give birth. It is throttling patriotism and common-sense and virility of individual character; it is even stunting its own squat idol by taking away pain with one hand only to foster it with the other; and, worst danger of all, its success means the destruction of all manlier ideals of character than its own.

Consider the gospel of painlessness in a few of its developments; and take first the simplest. Whence come the flaccid ideas of to-day in point of health and sickness? Why do we hatch out addled babies from incubators? Why does the 'Daily Telegraph' endow cripples with Christmas hampers? In order, you would naturally answer, first, to bring into the world beings who must needs be a curse to themselves and to everybody about them; second, to persuade these beings that there is some kind of merit in being such a curse. Everybody who knows anything of working men's homes knows how proud of its deformity a cripple of that class can be, and how that pride is pandered to and even shared by all who can claim kinship with it. At a charitable Christmas entertainment held annually in the East End, it is the custom to put up the most misshapen cripples procurable to sing a hymn by themselves; and the hideous exhibition is by far the most popular turn of the evening. Now, nothing can be more rankly unwholesome than such a state of sentiment. It may be unjust to blame cripples; it is as unjust and far more pernicious, remembering that their case is nearly al-

ways due to the vices or negligence of parents, to pamper them. Parents should be taught to be ashamed of crippled children. And children, both in this and higher states of life, ought to be taught to be proud of being well, not of being ill; to be taught that sickness is not a source of interest, but a badge of inferiority; that to be healthy is the prime condition of all things desirable in life, and that the only way to palliate ill-health is to ignore it. Such an education might be trusted to breed healthy bodies controlled and mastered by healthy minds. But that would be blasphemy against the gospel of painlessness. Pain is to be assuaged if possible, but cockered in any case; to be pitied, advertised, rewarded—anything except silently endured.

Moreover, this new humanitarianism is always conspicuously illogical in the working out of its own creed. Aiming at nothing higher than the extinction of pain, its disciples, by sheer feather-headedness, cause a great deal more suffering than they alleviate. It is too early to follow the after-life of the incubator-hatched baby; but it is fairly safe to predict that throughout a brief and puny life its unwholesomeness will mock the false humanity that would not let it die. As for the cripples, there is in Queen Square, Bloomsbury, a small, but very admirably managed, hospital for that branch of them which suffers from hip-disease. Now, if you are to cherish cripples, you would think that there could be no better way of doing so than this—the more so in that hip-disease is

both incurable and incapacitating. But no. That hospital, because it is quiet and no hand at advertising, is indigent to the point of shutting its doors; whilst money flows in merrily to buy turkeys for other cripples' relatives' Christmas dinners. Perhaps the reason for the antithesis is that the object must not merely be an imperfect human being, but, in order to win full sympathy, must exhibit himself as such in public.

Yet it may be neither by oversight nor by inconsideration that this little hospital is starved. For you must know that among our humanitarians is a strong wing, which objects strenuously to hospitals altogether. It is an extraordinary irony that the self-sent apostles, whose mission is to do away with pain, should launch some of their finest diatribes against hospitals, which have no other mission in the world than themselves to combat pain. An extraordinary irony—but it is perfectly true, and the fact is very fruitful of enlightment. You will find in the writings of these apostles attacks on the atrocities of hospitals set out with language almost too strong to be applied to a dead deer. Hospitals, they tell us, are shambles where human victims are vivisected for the curiosity, not to say the entertainment, of cold scientists. We are exhorted in fervent rhetoric to rise all together and stop the butchery of our fellow-men for a surgeon's holiday. This cry, which peals periodically from a part of the press of London, is almost the most instructive of all the manifestations of the new spirit. The sur-

geon understands what he is doing with his patient; his detractors do not. His aim is ultimately the same as theirs—to eliminate pain from life; they can hardly dispute that. But just because he understands, because he takes a broad view, because, without neglecting the individual case, he looks beyond it to principles which may prove of general beneficence—because of this he is next door to a murderer. Herein, not expressed but involved, you have the craven fear of pain in its naked simplicity. You must not cut to save a limb, to save a life, to save ten thousand lives—because we cannot bear to see the blood. Send out as many cripples, as many valetudinarians as you will—but we cannot bear to think of the supreme moment of kill or cure. Put us under morphia to muffle our pain, let a nurse sit holding our hand and stroking our forehead. But if you inflict one healing pang, exert one touch of salutary discipline, then you are no benefactor, but a heartless devil.

The outcry against vaccination, against vivisection, furnishes an exactly parallel case. The same sentiment is at the heart of both—the unconquerable shrinking from initial pain, even though it promise to repay itself by tenfold exemption in the future. Of course the agitators against vaccination and vivisection assure themselves that there are no repaying benefits to follow, and in a way they are sincere. But their sincerity is not that which comes from a cool-headed review of known facts; it is the sincerity of an emotion which has overwhelmed reason.

An unbiassed deduction from the experience of smallpox epidemics, from the records of medical progress, must convince the most unwilling of us that the benefits of both vaccination and vivisection are real and appreciable. Whether they outweigh the death of a few weakly infants and the suffering of a few insensitive animals is another question—most people would readily answer it with a "Yes." The anti-vaccinators and anti-vivisectors might, on consideration, answer it with a "No." But the instructive feature of their case is that they do not consider at all. They never get so far. The sight of the scabs on the baby's arm, the idea of the yelping of a tortured dog—the first hint or imagining of physical pain—is enough to paralyse their reason.

The same blind horror of physical pain may be found at the bottom of half the 'isms of the day. In almost all, when they are strongly felt, it seems actually to destroy reason till the fad contradicts itself—as, for one more example, in the vegetarian, who abstains from beef and chicken out of pity for bullocks and fowls, yet eats butter and eggs without ever asking to what fate he is thus dooming superfluous bull-calves and cockerels. The like unconscious self-condemnation awaits our humanitarians when they pass from the domain of physical to that of moral incapacity. Nowhere do they show their sentimentality and their unreason better combined than in what is called prison-reform. A plain man who sees the warm, airy, light, clean cells of British prisons is apt to ask himself wherein, but

for the necessary loss of liberty, the hardship of punishment consists. Let him turn to the exponents of painlessness and he will discover that our prisons also, as well as our hospitals, are dens of hideous cruelty. When he tries to find out what it is all about, he discovers that some prisoners have meagre fare, that a few are set to really hard physical work, that convicts spend a small part of their sentence without constant companionship, that habitual insubordinates can, on a magistrate's order, be whipped with a whipcord cat, and that warders do not always speak to convicts with respect. This is called cruel, tending to madness, brutalising. Our grandfathers would have laughed at such charges. Such cruelty, they would have replied, would come not amiss to wife-beaters, ravishers, swindlers; if a man goes mad in nine months, although he can constantly speak to his fellow-prisoners at exercise or when at work about the corridors, then his mental balance is no loss to himself or anybody; the very cat can hardly brutalise him, since he has to be brutal before he could earn it. But such replies are not for our soft-hearted generation. Instead they point us westward to free America, whose felons, as a native authority has said, are "better housed, fed, clad, and comforted than the labouring poor of any other portion of the globe"; whose housebreakers feed on beef-steaks and hot biscuits for breakfast, and street-walkers get jam to their tea. They point us to Elmira, that university miscalled a prison, where the embezzler is taught German,

shorthand, and telegraphy, and the disguise-artist is encouraged to model in wax.

It is all one more outcrop of exactly the same folly. Avoid immediate pain—no matter at what cost hereafter. And here again the folly is exactly as ironically self-destroying. It would be absurd to ask whether criminals inflict or suffer the more pain. It may be all one to you whether pain be deserved or not; to save the guilty the greater suffering, you may, as would willingly many of our crack-brained sentimentalists, inflict the lesser upon the innocent. But this is exactly what they do not do; to save the guilty the lesser evil, they plague the guiltless with the greater. In point of fact, the modern vice of pampering criminals may fairly be held to cause greater inconvenience both to the innocent victims and to the interesting agents. For laxity does not reform. It was supposed that the University Extension course of Elmira did prevent those who had experienced it from returning for a further term of instruction; only one day it came out that the lectures on Moral Philosophy were supplemented by smacking with a sort of butter-patter, and we may fairly attribute the deterrent effect to the bodily influence rather than the spiritual. For the rest, crime increases in lax America. In Great Britain—severe by comparison with America, though lax enough when you consider the punishments of former days—crime is decreasing. The only other European country of which you can say the same is Belgium, where our hu-

manitarians will hold up horrified hands to hear that sentences of nine years' solitary confinement are enforced, and that a sort of convalescent prison is needed to bring the criminal gradually back to his reason. No such barbarity for us! Among us you will find a tumult of voices ever crying aloud for less, not more, severity. And, so far as crime can be checked or encouraged by punishment, they are asking for reforms that will spread crime, involve more frequent if less sure terms of detention for criminals, and thus add prodigiously to the sum-total of suffering among guilty and guiltless alike. Here once more the gospel of painlessness recoils to its own defeat.

Nowhere will you find the new doctrine better exemplified than in politics. It is a guiding principle of that school which delights to cry down British methods, British policy, British achievements. If pain, as such, is the one great evil, it is all one whose pain it is. There is no more distinction between your own countrymen and another. There is no more tragedy in the death of your countryman doing his duty than in the death of an Orukzai who shoots his uncles from behind walls. There is no such possibility as patriotism left. You will start reasonably enough; the true patriot, you will say, desires the highest good of his country, which is not to be found in killing Orukzais; and though you hold an Orukzai's life just as high as a Gordon Highlander's, you do not hold it a whit higher. An Armenian is a human life and a Turk is a human

life, and the one is as precious as the other. You may start with these plausible principles, but you will not maintain them. The very friction with your simpler fellows, who hold any one British life worth any half-dozen others, will irritate your theoretic philanthropy into a steady prepossession against your own countrymen. The sight of any man violating your precept will stir your humane indignation to a bloodthirsty desire for the suffering of the violator. This is called righteous anger, but in its effects, had it but free play, it is the old irony —humanitarianism defeating its own end. What better instance than the Anglo-Armenians, who first fanatically swallow oriental tales of outrage, then frantically exaggerate and agitate till they have stirred the half truth into hideous reality; then they are for war and slaughter, as though a stream of blood were to be slaked by a deluge. The professed war-haters have been of late the very men who cry most savagely for a war more deadly than a century of barbarous faction-fighting. The party of force-at-no-price, of abstract quixotic justice, is the first to find unsuspected—and non-existent—points in favour of the United States when the Republic makes baseless claims on their own country and backs them by unmannerly bluster. It must be so inevitably. No man is so superhuman in his dry intelligence that he can keep a principle impartially applied to affairs that stir the passions of nations. And he that is not with his country is against it.

Perhaps these are illustrations enough. It is not alleged that the various modern tendencies here touched on are all ramifications of a gigantic conspiracy labouring to impose its formula on the world. They have their family likeness and their mutual sympathies, but their fundamental unity is unconscious. Yet that fundamental unity exists; the elevation of pain and—not pleasure, mark, but —the absence of pain into the ultimate standards of evil and good. Applied without common-sense or self-control, it is plain that this standard works its own undoing. But that, it will be urged, is no valid aspersion on the standard itself. Would not the test of avoidance of pain, honestly and judiciously applied, furnish a trustworthy guide for public action? Does not civilisation itself consist exactly in this—in an organised common effort for the extinction, so far as is attainable, of pain and of death?

Certainly there is a measure of truth in this. The organisation of a civilised State is a vast conspiracy for the preservation of life. A rank socialist might see his way to denying this; yet it remains undeniable that even for the lowest, weakest, and poorest a modern civilised State gives such security of life as the low and weak and poor know in no other form of society. Civilisation lays a restraining hand on the strong and bold, who would bully us; it furnishes great devices and combinations whereby we may win comforts from nature which without them would be too hard for us. It finds incubators to

help us into the world, and disinfectants to keep us from helping our fellows out of it.

Certainly civilisation does all this. And yet there is no divine virtue in civilisation, either the word or the thing. If civilisation is a conspiracy for the preservation of puny life, lowering the physical standard of the race, then civilisation may be no blessing, but a curse. Civilisation, further, is not only not divine; it is human. If its broad and general tendencies are unrecognised by those in the stream of them, they are not less products of human will. We can change or guide the stream of civilisation, after all; it behooves us the more, therefore, to look anxiously to its direction.

The present direction in Britain appears on the above showing to be a wrong one; if we are not careful it will lead us straight to national perdition. Civilisation is making it much too easy to live; humanitarianism is turning approval of easiness of living into the one standard of virtue. A wiser civilisation would look, not to the indiscriminate preservation of life, but to the quality of the life preserved. A wiser humanitarianism would make it easy for the lower quality of life to die. It sounds brutal, but why not? We have let brutality die out too much. Our horror of pain has led us to foster only the softer virtues and leave the harsher alone. Again, it sounds absurd even to use such a phrase as "harsher virtues"—though Aristotle, to take one instance of a man perhaps as wise as we, knew very well what they are. His ideal of character was not

the kind man, nor the man opposed to corporal punishment, nor the man superior to mere patriotism, but the great-souled man. This quality is "the crown of all virtues; it enhances them, and cannot begin to exist without them." And among the attributes of the great-souled man were these. He was the man "who holds himself worthy of great deserts, and is so worthy. . . . The great-souled man despises justly, whereas the crowd despises at haphazard. To be respected by the lowly he holds as vulgar as to use his strength against the weak. . . . In his life he takes no heed of any but his friends; to do otherwise is servile; which is why all flatterers are coarse and all the lowly are flatterers. . . . He is no gossip; he will tattle neither of himself nor of others, for it is all one to him whether others praise or condemn him."

Nobody wants to re-establish a Greek standard of character for British men—the less so in that its results as handed down by the Greeks themselves are not overworthy of admiration. Nevertheless we might well admit these heathen virtues of proper pride and a sort of self-respecting egoism, and others, as a bracing tonic to our later morality. We ought not to forget to temper mercy with justice—even with that rude and brutal exercise of superiority which may be called natural justice. It was not by holding all men—not to say all beasts—as of equal right with ourselves that we made ourselves a great nation. It is not thus that we

keep ourselves great. We became and are an Imperial race by dealing necessary pain to other men, just as we become powerful men by dealing necessary pain to other animals—whether they be slaughtered oxen or hunted stags. There is no reason in gloating over the pain we have risen upon, but there is even less in pretending that it does not exist. We may as well recognise that if we are to remain, nationally and individually, fitted to cope successfully with nature, with rival animals and with rival men, we must find and observe some other virtues besides those which consist in combating pain. Already our gentler civilisation has softened us physically. We make bicycle records, but we are not prepared to converse coolly while having our legs cut off, as was the way of our great-grandfathers. We are better fed, better clothed, better housed than they were; probably we enjoy better health, and certainly we live longer. But we do not drink so well, love so well, suffer so well, fight so well; physically and emotionally we have subdued ourselves to a lower plane. Partly this follows inevitably on alleviated material conditions which we could not put back if we would; but partly it is due to the softening of our current ethics. It is believed in our generation that men who are ready to inflict pain are precisely the men who are unready to endure it, though, curiously, that same generation refuses to flog wife-beaters and assaulters of children. In their case the principle may be broadly true; but it was not

true of our forefathers—Covenanters, buccaneers, politicians, sailors, pitmen; what you will. They burned and marooned and beheaded and shot and fought cocks; but they were quite ready to bear the like sufferings when their turn came. So they bred hardihood; yet, brutes as you may call them, they still continued to be not less generous, loving, even self-sacrificing, than we. Within the limits they recognised as claiming their duty—family, friends, country—they could be all sweetness; outside they could be pitiless. On these painfully unhumanitarian principles they built the British Empire.

At present we keep it on these principles—only we try not to let ourselves know it. We shoot down dervishes who are fighting for their religion as sincerely as did our own Ironsides, and Matabele who have every whit as pure a belief in the righteousness of slave-raiding as we in its iniquity; we drive Afridis into the bitter snow to starve because they think it well to steal rifles and shoot strangers, while we do not. The naked principle of our rule is that our way is the way that shall be walked in, let it cost what pain it may. Meantime our humanitarians preach exactly the contrary. And if they are right we have two courses before us. Either we may go on, as now, conducting our Empire by force, and pretend that we do so by charity and meekness; or we may cease to conduct it by force, and try to do so by charity and meekness. In the first case we shall finally engrain

hypocrisy as the dominant trait of our national character; in the second we shall very soon have no national character or national self-esteem or national existence to lose.

As the savage virtues die out, the civilised vices spring up in their place. Pride gives way to the ambition to be thought to have a right to be proud; frank contempt and hatred are replaced by backbiting. The readiness to hurt or be hurt physically we exchange for a smoother but deadlier unscrupulousness. The duel was hissed out of England because it killed the body; in its stead reigns scandal, which kills the soul. Sport, which slaughters beasts, is yielding to betting on professional athletics, which fritters away the minds of men. As we become more sensitive to physical, we become more callous to mental agony. An educated woman, a woman in society, a good woman, will whimper for a week if her child is to have a mole cut from its cheek, and cannot bear to see the operation, lest she should faint at the sight of blood. But she will dress herself carefully and attend a trial for murder, dividing her opera-glass impartially, while the jury are away, between such part of the face of the accused as he cannot cover with his hands and the face of his wife. And yet, when that man is proved a cold-blooded murderer, this good woman will be the first to shudder at the reflection that he is to be hanged. We talk of our age as spiritual, but what is this but gross materialism? Pain is no longer to be considered unless it can be felt with the

body. So, while we shudder at the pains of a small war, and would go to almost any humiliation to avert a great one, we are every year more in bondage to industrial strife—to the blind selfishness of the locker-out and the malignant factiousness of the trade-unionist. Here is more materialism: death is not death unless you can see the bleeding bodies. But then, of course, industrial war only ruins our country: the other kind of war might hurt foreigners. For—deplorably, perhaps, but incontestably—the content of the human affections is limited; and the more love we spare for men of other race and speech and colour, the less we have left for our own.

And what a pitiful spirit in itself, this new crusade against pain! It is not the cult of pleasure,—that its votaries would be the first to disclaim. It is a creed purely negative—a creed, therefore, inferior to the merest Epicureanism. A moral code that is positive is at least a creed that makes a man more of a man; a code that is all negative—all antis and no pros—makes nothing but a protesting machine—a string of self-righteous formulas. We must not hurt stags, and we must not whip criminals, and we must not, it now appears, cut out cancers; but what may we do? Attend League football matches, teach garrotters moral philosophy, and dose the cancerous with homœopathic globules? The substitutes are inadequate enough; but to do justice to those whom we are protesting against, it is not they who propose such substitutes. Faddists propose many ridiculous

remedies for imaginary diseases; but the newest kind of sentimental humanitarian is not necessarily or even generally a faddist. He or she has simply a vague shudder at the thought of pain, and often backs it up by no fad or positive suggestion at all; it is merely a sentiment without principle. Only that sentiment is coming more and more to suffuse and to inspire all our British thought—the shudder is beginning to be accepted instead of a code of morality. It is all for forbidding and no permitting, for undoing and no doing, for an abstract average common weal, but no concrete individual weal. It tends towards a compact by which we shall all of us covenant to do nothing lest one of us might hurt another. It is not the frame of mind which makes great fortunes, or great nations, or great men. No; nor even good men. Unless a good man is good in quite another way from a good horse or a good table, he is not a man who most fully embodies the properties of a man; which object is assuredly not attained by the mere refusal to give or suffer pain. Goodness is difficult to define, and still more difficult to dogmatise about, but it is at least safe to say that it consists in action, not in abstinence from action. To suppose it lies in a negative, even of the most amiable kind, is an emasculation of the word fit only to produce a nation of blameless, praiseless nobodies. "It is our sins that make us great."

The idea that pain is the worst of evils destroys many virtues which we cannot afford to lose; it

fosters many vices which we could gratefully spare; it is a bloodless, unfruitful basis for morality. And for the last point, it is in most cases—not in all, but in most—a lie. The people that pretend to elevate it to a principle do not really believe it. Out of paradox, out of moral self-conceit, out of genuine tenderness of heart, they may say they do; but at heart they generally do not. How many genuinely believe, and practically enforce the belief, that a beast's pain should outweigh a man's profit? How many genuinely believe that a wife-beater should not be beaten? How many truly think that it is as deplorable that an Afridi should be shot as that a Briton should? There are some such possibly: you will know them by their refusal to drink milk, their habit of allowing themselves to be pushed in a crowd without pushing back, their readiness to give their daughters in marriage to savages. With the rest humanitarianism is not a principle, but a weakness. It is even a vicarious cowardice. By sympathy they transfer the pain of others to themselves, and their pity is not benevolence, but dislike of sensations painful to themselves. Now it is nobody's duty to like painful sensations; but in a world full of them and for all we can see inevitably full of them, it is everybody's duty to face them. To refuse to do so will certainly do little enough towards their extinction. And to the few who do honestly try to abolish the painful as such, we may make bold to say that, should they succeed, mankind would be poorer, weaker, and even unhappier without it.

FROM THE NEW GIBBON.[1]

. . The close of the nineteenth century beheld the British Empire at the highest pitch of its prosperity. The records of every contemporary nation celebrate, while they envy, the multitude of its subjects and the orderly felicity of its citizens. Its frontiers comprehended the fairest regions of the earth; and its authority extended alike over the most dutiful of daughter-peoples and the wildest and most sequestered barbarians. The judicious delegation of the minor prerogatives of government conciliated the free affections of the Colonies; and the ruder dependencies were maintained in contented, if unenthusiastic, submission by the valour, the conduct, and the impartial justice of their alien administrators. Two centuries of empire had seemed insufficient to oppress or enervate the virile and adventurous spirit of the British race. It tempted the ardours of the Sudan sun at midsummer, and cheerfully sustained the rigours of the icy winter of the Klondyke. While the hardy soldier defended and continually propagated the distant boundaries of Victoria's dominions, the tranquil and prosperous state of the British Islands was deeply felt, if grudgingly admitted, by every class of their population. There, if anywhere on the earth,

[1]Blackwood's Magazine, February, 1899.

was to be found wholesome public feeling untainted by faction and wealth, unobnoxious to jealousy. The distinction of Conservative and Liberal preserved the name of party government without its substance; and the purely formal opposition of denominations, rather than of principles, served as a useful check on the dominant party without risk of cataclysm in the general policy of the State. The example of France, her secular enemy, emphasised the just complacency with which Britain seemed to regard her condition. The republic groaned under an alteration of licence and tyranny; the monarchy breathed freely in the reasonable acceptance of laws, enacted honestly for the general good and applied indifferently by judges of grave sacrosancity. In her foreign relations France alternately intrigued and precipitately withdrew from the consequences of her duplicity; Britain pursued her designs with unyielding tenacity, but in uninjurious silence. Unvexed by the conscription which weighed upon their neighbors, and secure in the protection of their invincible navy, the people affected the arts of peace, and received the accustomed reward of a single devotion. The workshop of the world since two generations, Britain neither dreaded the competition of strangers nor listened to the cautions of the more sagacious of her own children. The Recessional of the sublime Kipling and the economic speculations of the inquisitive but censorious Mallock fell alike unheeded on the ears of those who were content to argue that the con-

dition of the lower orders, though insufficient to their own appetence, was luxurious compared to that of their fellows abroad, while the easy splendour of the rich inflamed the emulation of all mankind; and that the public exchequer supported with facility all burdens which the ever-increasing exigencies of the Empire might impose.

It was scarcely possible that the eyes of contemporaries should discern in the public felicity the latent causes of decay and corruption. To the vulgar mind the British Empire was a triumphant proof of the possibility, as of the blessings, of a wise democracy; yet in that very process of democracy were inherent the seeds of ruin. In the domain of Government the political genius of the Anglo-Saxon race, its bias toward compromise and detestation of extremity, surmounted with impunity experiments that would have proved fatal to any other people less singularly endowed. But while the leaders of the nation were satisfied with promoting or seeking to retard the popular encroachment upon the functions of government, democracy infused a slower and more secret poison into the vitals of society. If the opinion of the vulgar was unacknowledged in Parliament, in every other department of life it insensibly permeated the whole spirit of the people. It became a maxim of Imperial policy, a law of social development, a canon of taste. The Englishman of the beginning of the nineteenth century was accustomed to demand that his policy should be glorious, the accessories of his

daily life unsurpassed in quality, the objects of his æsthetic admiration beautiful. The Englishman of the end of that period of decadence was content if they were cheap.

The student of that age will find melancholy evidence of degeneration in the printed records, and especially in the newspapers, of the time. The reported speeches of public men, the venal arguments of leader-writers, the tattling of the parasites of fashion, the statistics of the markets, the very advertisements, bear unanimous testimony to the debased ideas which then enjoyed a ready and unprotested currency. The Empire, that magnificent fabric founded upon the generous impulse to conquer and to rule, was now formally regarded as a mere machine for the acquisition of pounds sterling. A Palmerston and a Disraeli had been the spokesmen of the earlier Imperialism; the later found its apt mouthpiece in a Chamberlain. The masterful truculence of the British gentleman and the opulent imagination of the Anglicised Jew this generation cheerfully exchanged for the ambitions of a manufacturer fostered by the arts of a demagogue. Gifted with an extraordinary intuition of the changing predilections of his countrymen, Chamberlain was enabled to turn, to the advantage of his own popularity, the flood of patriotism which rose in the decade between the first and second Jubilees of Queen Victoria. He became the high-priest of what was fondly saluted as the new Imperialism, on the lips of whose votaries British Empire was

synonymous with British commerce. His declamations, while they will reward the curious investigator with little that is either original in thought or elegant in expression proclaim but too eloquently the altered feelings with which the later Britons regarded their greatness. Where they had once resolved to possess, they now aspired but to trade.

The jargon of the day clamoured for "the open door," by which phrase was understood a market which British products could enter on terms of fiscal equality with those of the rest of the world. In the manlier age of Drake and Hawkins Britain had opened her own door for herself; now her diplomacy all but petitioned for an equality of treatment which the growing incapacity of her own traders must, in any event, have rendered fruitless. Among the strange ironies which the historian of this period finds himself compelled to record, none is more deeply ironical than the fact that, in proportion as the nation came to regard commerce as its highest and only weal, so commerce itself lost vitality and astuteness. The degeneracy of the people spread to that very activity to which they had sacrificed their nobler sentiments of empire; and while arms and justice, arts and letters, were postponed in the general estimation to manufacture and trade, these mercenary avocations were themselves pursued without energy and almost without common shrewdness. Like the ostrich of mythology, her head buried in the sand of obsolete traditions and antiquated success,

Britain alone of the nations of Europe refused to educate her commercial travelers or to accede to the terms of payment required by her customers, clung to her chaotic weights and measures, and haughtily announced to the world that it must forego such goods as its wants demanded, and purchase only what Britain was pleased to sell. In Germany, in Belgium, and in the United States sprang up keen and victorious competition; and though the vast wealth of England was as yet almost unimpaired, a few sagacious minds, while impartially blind to the more fatal deterioration of the nation's spirit, were already enabled to foresee and to predict the approaching disasters to its traffic.

At the same time, as it was thus sought, by menace or persuasion, to extend the principles of free trade abroad, at home they were eating, like a deep and consuming canker, into the very marrow of Britain. The insidious principles of Bright and Cobden had made her the workshop of the whole world; but they brought to her the physical debility of the workman as well as his wages. The profits of the manufacturer and the cheap food of the operative were paid for by the starvation of the hind, the bankruptcy of the farmer, and the ruin of the landowner. On every industrial benefit followed an agricultural calamity; and the prosperity of the town was remorselessly attended by the beggary of the hamlet. The movement of the population accompanied, as in every age, the distribution of wealth; so that the towns distended

to cities and the hamlets disappeared in a wilderness.

The effects of life in cities were apparent and pernicious. But for the unbroken attestation of both printed and pictured records, it would be difficult indeed to credit the full horrors exhibited by such districts as Lancashire or the Black Country at the end of the nineteenth century. There the wildest flights of hyperbole were equaled and exceeded by dismal truth, and the sun was literally obscured at noonday. A host of ungainly chimneys loaded the air with poisonous fumes which oppressed the hardiest species of vegetation. The inhabitants, penned up by day in close factories or the dimmer and more stifling obscurity of mines, herded by night in crowded tenements, were pale, sickly and meagre; and, by a malignant decree of nature, the species became more prolific in proportion as they transmitted less vigour to their offspring. The philosopher of that age observed that the immigrant countrymen supported the unwholesome conditions of the towns better than the feebler natives, and that their superior robustness conferred an advantage in the competition for employment; but the second and third generations dissolved away in equal langour under the pestilent circumstances of an unnatural existence. The momentary profit of the fathers was visited in debility on the children, and served only to precipitate the speed of his hideous process of degeneration.

The universal experience of mankind confirms

the opinion that the sole defence of a nation against external enmity lies in the preservation of a robust and high-spirited peasantry. The British farm-laborer had found himself naturally possessed of many of the qualities requisite for a soldier. His form was vigorous, and inured to hardship and privation. He had a natural habit of obedience, and in many instances was already proficient in the use of weapons and accustomed by the pursuit of game to the simpler operations of war. The children of the factory, from whom it now became necessary to recruit the army, had none of these capacities; they were feeble in body, insubordinate in temper, and habituated by experience to a mode of life which rendered them awkward and discontented in the field. As yet, however, the British army showed but few signs of deterioration from the standards of its glorious history. The courage of its legionaries was unbroken, and its officers, besides training them in peace and leading them in war with matchless courage and coolness, found superfluous energy to raise and discipline auxiliary troops hardly, if at all, inferior to the British regiments themselves. Northern India and the basins of the Upper Nile and Niger supplied excellent soldiers, who proved their valour and endurance in all the wars of the end of the nineteenth century. They constituted the major part of the successful expeditions to Tirah, to Khartum, and to Bida; but the very strength they brought to British arms was an insidious source of decline. As the warlike

spirit and manly force of the white races succumbed to the enervating influence of industrial civilisation, the Government of London relied more and more on the martial virtue of its subject barbarians. These, whether in India or Africa, were as forward in the field as the British regiments, and undertook, almost unaided by them, the necessary fatigues which contribute even more than the sword to the successful prosecution of a campaign. It was perhaps an inevitable consequence of the imperial fate which impelled Britons to make war in every clime; since the severities of the Afghan winter, which chilled the courage of the British troops, were scarcely felt by the hardy children of Nepaul; while the Sudanese and Hausas, in their turn, were better able to resist the beams of an African sun. But it was significant, if as yet unnoticed, that the masters of the Empire grew either less able or less willing to risk their own troops in its unhealthier regions, and were yearly more disposed to delegate their defence to a mercenary army. The indomitable spirit of the English gentleman prompted him to seek martial enterprises at the head of the alien levies, whose continual service proffered the fairest chance of action and honour; and the mass of the people, relieved of the cares of personal service, sank contentedly into the languid indifference of civil life. Black men and brown men, flanked with an increasingly inconsiderable proportion of white troops, won the British victories; and the cheaply fed British citi-

zens were content to sit and acclaim their prowess from the galleries of the music halls.

In sport, as in its analogue, war, the British degenerated with frightful rapidity. The very word had lost its original connotation; and the honourable name proper to the manly exercises of hunting, shooting and fishing, whose charm consists in matching man's strength and cunning against that of wild nature, was usurped by childish or plebeian exhibitions of mere brute strength and agility. The Briton found his pleasure in bestriding a bicycle instead of a horse, in striking a tennis-ball instead of a wild-fowl; nor was he even sensible of the degradation that could prefer a mechanical toy to a living creature with a will independent of, yet conformable to, his own. Even the older and more reputable games, like cricket, football, and skittles, which might have defended themselves as affording at least a semblance of wholesome activity to the youth of towns, were turned by a truly devilish ingenuity into engines of enervation and decay. It ceased to be fashionable to join personally in these spasmodic but active pastimes. The populace thronged to them in thousands, but only to pay for the privilege of witnessing as lazy spectators recreations which were fondly called national. Some of these exhibitions were more than merely effeminate; active corruption was added in allurements to drunkenness, and in a factious partisanship which sometimes blew up to brutal assaults on the umpires of the game, and was always a fertile

source of gambling. In their amusements, as in their wars, Britons ceased to play a personal part, finding a substitute for the vigorous sports of their fathers in the force and address of well-paid mercenaries, which in a more strenuous age would have rebuked the insolent softness of those who pampered them.

Personal force and military hardihood were the price which Britain paid for cheap imported food; the other cheap commodities in which the people delighted were purchased at a no less ruinous rate. In every department of social life the tendency of this age was the same, leading to the concentration of every industry into huge establishments controlled by a few heads, and succeeding, by the preponderance of their resources, in underselling the enterprises of small private traders. The Londoner of this period bought his food, his clothing, his furniture, his books and newspapers, his very tobacco, from companies, stores, and amalgamations, which counted the volume of their traffic by millions and their profits by hundreds of thousands of pounds, their emporia by scores, and their employees by thousands. The tradesmen of the preceding generation were thankful to become the managers and the shopwalkers of their inflated supplanters, and earned a livelihood by disposing of goods for their masters at a third of the price they had formerly asked and obtained for themselves. The plausible sophistries of political economy celebrated the commercial revolution as a triumph of

the division of labour; but its moral effect on the people was as far-reaching as it was pernicious. Commercial power, hitherto divided with an approach to equality among a thousand merchants, now rested with a few groups, who absorbed and magnified the profits due to the labours of their subordinates. On these the status of inferiority, without responsibility or opportunity, worked its necessary effect; they no longer possessed that vigour of character which is nourished by the consciousness of self-dependence and the habit of individual judgment. When, as became ever more frequent, a great business was in the control of a limited company, the rigour of subordination verged upon the hopelessness of serfdom. The clerk of a personal employer might aspire for a partnership, and confidently demand humanity; but the servant of a body of directors sighed in vain for a position either of authority or of reasonable comfort. In this organisation of business, the peculiar product of the Victorian age, the sense of responsibility slipped from the directors as from the directed; it was not their concern, so they argued, if employees were underpaid or the public cheated; all that was done was in the name and the interests of the shareholders. These, in their turn, passing back their consciences to the directors, were satisfied to cloak their vicarious wickedness with a convenient ignorance.

While the fires of ambition were extinguished in the breasts of the lower, and the voice of conscience

silenced among the higher, circles of commerce, a particular corruption was reserved for the consumers. The wives of artisans and labourers had hitherto looked to their own industry for the clothing of themselves and their children,—as the smaller conveniences of the slender household had been made in moments of leisure by the labour of the husband. The new methods of trading cheapened everything, and especially clothing, to a price within the compass of the poorest; but in doing so it rudely broke the tie which bound the lower classes to their homes. The wife, who had been wont to pass the evening in the manufacture of garments for her children, now bought them at some great emporium; and, emancipated at once from the necessity of work and the practice of frugality, devoted the evenings to idle gossip or empty frivolity. On her trivial excursions she would be accompanied by her young children, which exposed their delicate immaturity to cold at the hours when it should have been fortified by sleep. The husband and father, no longer finding in his home the companionship craved by his brief hours of relaxation, sought it with better success at one of the gaudy public-houses, whose lights at the corner of every street attested the vices and the misfortunes of the poor. The happy home of the British plebeian passed from a reality to a proverb and from a proverb to a fable, and the fair picture of the past gave place to a blur of drunkenness, indolence, and disease.

The prevailing deterioration, which did not overlook the lowest, fastened greedily upon the highest ranks of the population. The Court, as a standard of polite manners, had almost ceased to exist. The retired life of the venerable Victoria during her later years left the leadership of fashion vacant, and the landed nobility was too impoverished, as well as too proud, to struggle for the vicegerency. The field of so-called society was left open to any adventurer with the effrontery to usurp it. Thus arose an inner circle of fashion, or, to call it by its contemporary and more appropriate name, of smartness, based neither upon birth nor elegance of manners, nor even invariably upon wealth, but rather upon a bold and clever arrogance, and supported in the general estimation mainly by brazen advertisement. An aristocracy of birth may be unintelligent, but it has usually fixed and sustained a high standard of deportment and, within certain limitations, of conduct. But a society like that of London, where the loudest voice was the most eagerly listened to, was immediately fatal to every canon of propriety and good taste. In effrontery of demeanour, in licence of speech, in gaudiness of dress, in the very use of paints and cosmetics, the English women of fashion drifted farther and farther from their fathers' modest ideal of a lady; till at length there was not wanting the final scandal of women with honest reputations studying and imitating, with a too easy fidelity, the costumes and

allurements of the most notorious French courtesans.

The love of letters might have been expected to oppose a barrier to the all-conquering vulgarity of the age. It was diffused over every class of society; the commonest labourers had acquired a taste for reading: Tennyson and Hall Caine were the theme of dissertations in the mining centres of the north and the pulpits of dissenting chapels. Never had books been so abundantly published or so widely read; the general average of literary merit had never been so high; but this age of mediocrity passed away without having produced a single writer of original genius, or who excelled in the arts of elegant composition. With the vast increase of readers promoted by the spread of elementary education, the social standing, as the monetary rewards, of authorship increased in equal proportion; but this cause, while it lowered the standard of taste, at once inflamed the cupidity and diverted the ambitions of men of letters; and what once had been a single-minded devotion degenerated into a trade, pursued rather for its accidental emoluments than for its intrinsic charm. The rates of pay of novelists were quoted by the agents like the prices of stock on the Exchange, or the chances of a horse-race; and he who, by economising his genius, might have been a master, squandered his stores in profuse over-production. With the plethora of books came a surfeit of commentaries on work which juster canons would have

left to the revision of posterity. A cloud of critics, of anthologists, and of log-rollers darkened the face of letters, and upon the decline of genius soon followed the corruption of taste. The last outrage upon the language of Shakespeare and Fielding was a swarm of periodical leaflets concocted of illiterate novelettes, unmeaning statistics, American jests, and infantile puzzles: they were consumed in prodigious quantities by the lower orders, and, by ruining the business of those who purveyed sincere if not masterly compositions, contributed more than any other cause to the debasement and final extinction of English letters.

With the proud spirit of Empire sunk into the narrow greed of the shareholder; with physical force at its ebb, sports corrupted, and martial spirit tamed; with domestic business so organised that it stifled individuality and fostered dishonest miserliness among traders, and invited the depravity of customers; with elegant manners and polite letters a tasteless echo of the half-forgotten past,—the British Empire entered upon the twentieth century under the gloomiest auspices. To the acuter eyes of succeeding generations that gloom is heightened by the reflection that the mutterings of the coming earthquake were all unheard by contemporaries; that they prided themselves on the greatness of their dominion, and hugged the specious perfection of their civilisation. Yet decline was already accomplished and irremediable, and fall was but too surely impending. The fair city still stood, but

men were wanting within it. Vulgarity, mediocrity, and cheapness had warped and stunted the most generous natures. The minds of all were reduced to the same level, the high spirit of Empire evaporated, and little interests, with sordid emotions, inspired every soul. Civilisation had completed its work in the suppression of the individual, and the British, the most virile of barbarians, the most forward and energetic of mankind, were designated by their very virtues as the first to experience the dire results of its consummation. The diminutive stature of mankind was daily sinking below the old standard; Britain was indeed peopled by a race of pigmies, and the puny breed awaited only the onset of the first crisis to become the woeful patient of defeat and ruin. . . .

WHAT HAPPENED IN THESSALY.[1]

"Are there many Bashi-Bazouks here?" tremulously asked an English nurse at Volo when the Turks occupied the town. "Only myself and a half-a-dozen others," replied the correspondent. An upstanding, clear-eyed, clear-skinned young Englishman—in a fez, to be sure, but also in a Norfolk jacket and cord breeches—was not the lady's conception of a Bashi-Bazouk at all. She had never seen a Bashi-Bazouk; probably none of the Europeans who had been making history in panic-stricken Volo had ever seen a Bashi-Bazouk. But they were all quite sure that the Turkish army was full of them, that they were terrible fellows when roused, and that they generally were roused. It was something of a revelation when they learned that the only Bashi-Bazouks with the army were English and American, French and German correspondents—most of them innocent creatures enough. For Bashi-Bazouk means a civilian who carries arms, and the only people answering to that description were the correspondents. The mind of the Turkish private does not comprehend the nature and functions of a journalist. Therefore, "Have you seen the English Bashi-Bazouks with long whips?" "Yes, they have gone to eat with

[1]Blackwood's Magazine, July, 1897.

the German Bashi-Bazouk with the black horse." So spoke the more highly educated: the simpler souls from remote Asia lumped us all together as "Bashi-Bazouk Allemanni," under the impression that all men out of uniform who wore boots must be Germans.

We were strange beasts to them. They used to stare at us, if they came on us suddenly, with the fixed, expanding eyes of a horse that is about to shy. Yet, after all, the Turk's ignorance of Europe is a small thing by the side of Europe's ignorance of the Turk. The Turk's mind is at least a blank; the European's is usually crammed with the grotesquest errors. The late war, which otherwise has done no good to anybody, has focussed a good many of these queer delusions, and given an opportunity to certain Europeans of bringing the eye of experience to bear on them. Perhaps the experience is neither very wide nor very deep. But considering the prodigies of credulity and irrelevance which stand to the credit of some correspondents who saw bits of the Turkish army through field-glasses, and many leader-writers who saw nothing at all, there is value even in a pair of not over-sharp eyes and rather less than the ordinary endowment of common-sense. I doubt if any of us who were with the Turkish army knows enough to write a trustworthy history of the war; I doubt if there ever was a war about which it was so heart-breakingly impossible to be sure of a name or a number or a date. But there never was a war of which it

was so easy either to be quite sure that the popular impressions were ludicrously wrong, or to be so confident in trying to correct them.

Because the Turks wore sloppy canvas slippers tied on with string, instead of the ammunition boot, it was predicted with the calmness of inevitable certainty that they were a disorderly rabble who could never stand a day before the civilised, disciplined, well-equipped forces of Greece. Because the Turks afterwards drove these disciplined forces like sheep before them, it was immediately inferred that the Turkish army was a magnificently organised machine, like the German, of which civilised Europe must take account henceforward. From that it was an easy step to the conviction that it was mainly officered by Germans. In spite of this civilising influence, it appeared that the Turks committed horrible atrocities wherever they went. And because it was indisputable that the Turks had burned the rafters of a few mud huts, and looted a chicken or so for the pot, they were once more a gang of disorganised ruffians, who were carrying on war with a devilish cruelty that war had never seen before. In April we were to admire the Greeks for the victories they were just going to win; in May we were to weep for the awful sufferings they had undergone. Why we were not, contrariwise, to pity the impending sufferings of the Turks in April and acclaim their triumphs in May, nobody ever seems to have explained.

The easiest to contradict of these nonsensical

stories is that which refers to the German officers. Being the easiest dispelled, it is also the most instructive. Grumbkow Pasha—a Colonel, I think, in the Kaiser's artillery—arrived at headquarters on the third day of the war. He was called Inspector-General of artillery; he held no executive command; he was never in a position to give an order. For four days he sat on the top of the Meluna Pass and gave advice, which, as a rule, was not followed. After that he went down into the Plain and accompanied the force which occupied Larissa — some four-and-twenty hours after the last Greek soldier had left it. He stayed in Larissa some two or three days, during which time the Turkish army consistently did nothing, and then he went back to Constantinople. "It is better so," explained a Turkish officer, with the charming simplicity of his race; "otherwise it might be said in Europe that our successes were due to him." I smiled. For if there was one man who had a right to be angry at any connection of his name with Edhem Pasha's operations, it was Grumbkow. To make him responsible for the dilatory incapacity which first failed to rout the Greeks at Mati, and then to crush them utterly when they kindly routed themselves — it would be blasting Grumbkow's reputation as a soldier for ever and ever. So the Inspector-General of artillery went away to receive an order set in brilliants. And excepting him there was no single German officer, other than the military attaché and two correspondents, with the Turkish army at any

single moment of the campaign, from the first action to the last.

Believing what Greeks said is probably the main cause of half the misapprehensions about the war. It is difficult at first to disbelieve what you are told by a whole army, especially when the army believes it itself. But until you train yourself to do this—until you train your mind into such a habit of scepticism that it instinctively disbelieves everything it hears—you are quite unfitted to form a judgment upon anything that happens in the Levant.

Lying is not confined to the Greeks. It is worst with the Greeks and the Armenians, because they are cleverest; but it flourishes exceedingly among Turks and Jews, and all Levantines. There are two kinds of it. One is the ordinary lie, with intent to deceive, such as we know it in the West. Of such lies as this the regal seats are Athens and Constantinople. Athens during the present war was by much the worse, perhaps only because there was most need of lying on the Greek side. Also the liars in the War Office at Athens and at the Crown Prince's headquarters found for a short intoxicating season that the world was disposed to believe them. Consequently the first few days of the war were a carnival of fiction. During the week between the battle of Meluna and the bolt from Larissa, the censorship—for very good and sufficient reasons—was rather rigid on the Turkish side: on the Greek side, it appears, it suppressed news steadily during

the whole campaign. Consequently the War Office at Athens had a quite clear field, and naturally it covered it with Turkish corpses. Five thousand yesterday, seven thousand to-day—when all the time nothing was happening but reconnaissances and desultory artillery duels, and shooting from behind stone-walls across precipitous ravines. Since the war ended the Greeks, curiously enough, have begun the same game again. Seventeen thousand Turks, somebody has telegraphed to a Roman newspaper—you cannot help feeling that this was surely a case for the more economical postal service—fell at the battle of Domokos; whereas in fact there can hardly have been much more than that number under fire at all.

This sort of lie is self-contradicted by events. The War Office at Athens got itself found out very early, and nobody gave it a moment's credence again. But there is a much subtler kind of lie, equally unworthy of belief, but far more difficult to disbelieve. This is the lie that is believed by the teller of it. Next only to the concoction of lies the Levantine excels in the swallowing of them. He would not believe a story about money which affected his own pocket unless he first had some reason to convince him that it was true. But short of that he knows no distinction between truth and falsehood in themselves, such as obtains in the colder North and West. With him imagination takes the place of reason. He will believe and spread the wildest fiction, if only it be effective and

well devised. If it is what he wishes to believe, or what he believes you wish to believe, that is quite enough to make him believe it. And believe it for the moment he does quite sincerely.

The Turkish army, for example, contained dozens of officers whom you could not set down as anything but charming, civilised gentlemen—yet not one so Europeanized that you could believe a word he said. Edhem Pasha himself told me with his own lips a delightful fable about the flight of the Greeks from Mati—how that the Albanians could not be restrained from singing war-songs as they marched; how that a Greek pope heard them from his belfry tower, and dashed off to tell the Crown Prince that he was outflanked. He pointed to the very belfry, alive to testify to the fact. I am convinced that he believed the tale absolutely, and I am convinced that it was absolutely false. But it was a pretty tale, and the oriental imagination was quite defenceless against it. If this was the attitude of the Commander-in-Chief, you can imagine the state of mind of the soldiers. They firmly believed that they were fighting the whole force of Greece, Italy, England, and France, and winning glorious victories over their combined armies every day. The fall of each Greek stronghold was announced to correspondents, not officially, but gravely and by high officers, days before the Turks came near it. Every morning my dragoman came to me with stories of Greek disaster—a thousand Greeks, ten thousand Greeks, a million Greeks, always myste-

riously killed between sundown and sunrise. "How do you know?" "The soldiers say so." "How do they know?" "Of course they know, the soldiers." "Did you hear any firing?" "No." "Then how could all the Greeks be killed?" "I don't know." "Do you believe it, then?" Well, no; when he came to think over the probabilities of it, he did not believe it. But without a Western Socrates to supplant his imagination by reason, he would never have dreamed of not believing it to the end of his days.

In a war between nations of this cast of thought, you can believe nothing but what you see. What you are told may be true, but it is just as likely to be false. If there is any reason for lying it is almost certain to be false; in any case neither Turk nor Greek understands the Western craving for accuracy, and neither will take any pains to satisfy it. Most of the war was seen by Europeans, and of this some day a trustworthy history may be written; about what was not so seen the truth will never be known. Anybody who hungers for statistics may hunger till he starves for them: he will never know the numbers of the killed and wounded. The Turks could afford to tell the truth if they knew it. But they do not. I did indeed meet one general who had entered in his pocket-book the losses of his division from day to day. This was Hairi Pasha, who was stated by the Greeks to have lost 7,000 men in one fight at Domassi. His whole force can hardly have been double that, and the pocket-book

showed ten killed and thirty-six wounded for the whole week. Assuming that his Excellency read out the figures correctly, I am inclined to believe in this note-book, as I can see no point in carrying about a note-book to deceive yourself with. Moreover, it appears to be a hobby of Hairi Pasha's not to lose men in action, as he ruined Edhem's combinations at both Pharsala and Domokos, rather than send his division under fire. But to expect the Turkish army to know how many men it lost is to ask grapes of thistles. You can make rough guesses: for instance, after Domokos some 900 men came into hospital; so that, with killed and with the wounded who never got into hospital, the loss was perhaps between 1200 and 1500. On the same sort of calculation, the Turkish losses in Thessaly for the whole war were perhaps 7000 or 8000. But no Turk would ever be likely to put it at anything so unsensational. Most would probably answer with vagueness but perfect truth, "It is not known." Others, according as a small or large figure appealed to their momentary sense of the fitness of things, might say a hundred or a hundred thousand. Really nobody knows. I suppose there is a sort of roll-call somewhere, but I never saw any sign of the use of it during the campaign. Even if there were, it would be impossible within a matter of weeks to know whether a man was dead, wounded, or only missing. Nobody outside the General Staff knew the country; nobody knew the disposition of the forces. Men lost their battalions

by the score, and strolled over the Thessalian Plain by the day looking for them. "Have you seen my battalion?"—the question has been put to me a dozen times in an hour's ride. Of course my dragoman, or anybody else that might understand Turkish, directed the straggler to the last battalion he had met. Ten to one it was the wrong one, in which case the wanderer started off on his travels again—ten to one in the wrong direction. Therefore it was impossible to tell the strength of a corps from day to day, impossible to estimate the losses, impossible to estimate the strength of the army.

In counting Greek losses the question is further complicated by the intolerable national self-conceit, which seeks, now that danger is over, to minimise losses, and also by the frequency of desertions. A man disappeared. He may have been killed and he may have been captured; but it was at least as likely that he had stripped off his uniform and crept back to his home in the back streets of Larissa or a village off the main roads in the plain. His Jewish or Mohammedan neighbours helped him to disappear for the time: he was sent neither to Salonica as a prisoner nor to Pharsala as a deserter. So that the Greek losses are even less possible to arrive at than the Turkish. A Turkish gunner would come in and announce with modest certitude that his shrapnel had that day accounted for 2000 of the enemy. About the same moment a Greek staff officer was commenting to

the correspondents on the curious phenomenon that so many hundred rounds of Turkish shrapnel had not grazed a single Greek finger. You can only be certain that the truth lies somewhere between the two—which yet leaves room for uncertainty enough

It will be inferred from all this that those authorities who represented the Turkish army, on the strength of its easy victories, as a formidable engine of war and a menace to Christian Europe were as far out as they were when they predicted its early collapse on the strength of its beggarly appearance. At Elassona it was a rabble, because the men lacked boots—which they would still have lacked had boots grown on every tree. At Larissa it was an organisation that might have shamed Moltke, because in the meantime the Greeks had run away from it. In truth the Turkish army was neither the one nor the other. It was just good enough to do just what it did. It could drive the Greeks before it, but could not destroy them. It drove the Greeks because it was an army of good men; it failed to destroy them because it was an army of bad officers. It would be hard to exaggerate either the goodness or the badness. The Turkish soldier is the raw material of the finest fighting in the world; his officer is the finished product of one of the worst governments in the world. Nobody becomes a villain in a moment, but it must be owned that the career of the Turkish officer leaves him very little alternative in the long-

run. He is not, of course, the monster of barbarian cruelty which British fancy often loves to paint him. In his demeanour he is a much nearer approach to the British idea of a gentleman than the Briton often encounters outside his own country. Courteous, dignified, often vain, but yet self-contained enough not to be a swaggerer, he has the root of gentlemanliness in him—a secure self-confidence and self-respect. You will not find in the Turk the jerky self-assertiveness which to our eyes mars the behaviour of officers even in the great European armies. He can maintain his dignity without any duello or court of honour. He is quite sure of himself.

You may divide the Turkish officers into two clearly marked types—each, I am afraid, with as clearly marked faults. There is the Constantinopolitan—the staff officer, the aide-de-camp, the officer of the crack regiments quartered about the Yildiz; there is also the regimental officer from the provinces. The first is usually a man of some means, occasionally of great wealth. He gets promotion early. He reflects something of the cosmopolitanism of Constantinople; he is a man of refinement, talks French or German or both, is quite emancipated from fanatical Mohammedanism, drinks sweet champagne and neglects prayer-time, is a bit of a courtier. And it is just this bit of a courtier that is his ruin. He is insincere, an intriguer, not too scrupulous about money. In the study of their profession officers of this class, es-

pecially the younger, are theoretically very well equipped. I saw a good deal of a little lieutenant who spoke of "les lois de la tactique" with the same hushed awe as of "sa Majesté Impériale." One of the laws, I remember, was that you must never on any account attack the enemy unless with at least double his force. But I am afraid this well-educated and most amiable officer had not the least beginning of the makings of a real soldier. He had never been out of Constantinople in his life before; he was a wobbly and tactless horseman; he puffed heavily up-hill; he had not the very vaguest idea of finding his way across a country. He could ride along a road twice daily for a week, and not recognise it when he struck it in the middle. To do him justice, he could live on next to nothing, though he was a glutton for sleep. He never did anything on his own responsibility. Although he had no duties to speak of, being merely a loosely attached aide-de-camp to nobody in particular, he preferred to sit about with his friends in Larissa rather than go out to see the battle of Pharsala. After the Turkish repulse at Velestino, when everybody expected another engagement for the morrow, he went off with a relative to a little picnic ten miles in rear. One day I was riding out with him to Meluna, the Commander-in-Chief being ahead, when there came down the pass a pony with baggage which he thought he recognised. "The Marshal is in retreat; the Greeks are advancing," he said; and without another word whipped round

and was well on his way down the pass before I could persuade him even to ask whether his fears were justified. He was a good-hearted boy, and so far as I know perfectly honest and independent. But he was quite helpless outside a town, had no initiative, no power of command. I should not like to say he was a coward, but he was certainly conspicuously lacking in dare-devilry and adventure. And he was a very favourable specimen of his class.

The provincial officer is entirely different. He is often penniless, and he is often a subaltern at fifty. But he is generally a brave man; he is inured to a rough life; he knows his men, and they know him. So far he is better equipped for command. Yet, rough as he is, he is generally self-indulgent; he is sluggish and utterly uneducated. He is left a good deal to his own initiative in war-time; he has no field-glass; he does not know in the least what is going on; it is always odds that he will lead his men into the wrong place, and then not know how to get them out again. He is a straighter man than the town-bred officer, and if he says he is your friend he probably means that he would put himself to some little inconvenience to serve you; most of the other kind would not willingly give you a biscuit though you were starving. Neither kind of officer is exceedingly disciplined—the provincial hardly at all, but then he does not exact much discipline from those under him. His men do not salute him, and he does not care. He sees that his orders are obeyed when he gives them;

but he usually finds it less trouble to give no orders at all, and let the company or the battalion command itself.

Of course we know for a fact that there have been German officers "reorganising" the Turkish army; but we also know—at least the less ignorant of us—that they have been almost heartbroken from first to last, because nobody ever took the least notice of their recommendations. They have left the Turkish army very much as they found it. The infantry, for example, has not the rudiments of fire discipline. You would have said the first step towards Germanizing them would have been to teach them to fire volleys; but I doubt if they fired a single volley, otherwise than accidentally, during the whole war. I doubt if they ever formed a firing-line. Their favourite formation seemed to be a kind of mixture of a skirmishing line and columns of companies. Each company as it went under fire spread out behind the last; and the men either fired so high that their bullets went clear over the enemy or so low that they lodged in their comrades' backs. They would probably have been effective with the bayonet, though I doubt if they were ever taught its use. Only, though there were bayonet charges at Meluna, the Greeks never waited to see what they could do with cold steel.

Indeed, thinking it over, I wonder to myself how there came to be any Greeks killed at all. The artillery was good, no doubt, at the beginning of the war; but artillery practice may be very good

and yet hit nobody. According to accounts from the Greek side, this was very much what happened. The cavalry—that hobgoblin cavalry, sticking to the backs of the scuttling Greeks—seems to have done singularly little for the noise it made. The swarms of fierce troopers that everybody was talking about let the Greeks escape from Larissa, from Pharsala, and from Domokos. But why? For the very simple reason that there were no swarms of fierce troopers. On their own showing the Turks never had more than four regiments of 1000 sabres apiece, and even this was an enormous exaggeration. The average strength of a squadron was thirty to forty horses, and I never saw more than ten squadrons together. With deductions for patrols, escorts, and orderlies, I greatly doubt if the Turks ever had more than 500 effective cavalry. Such as it was, the cavalry went to Velestino. And there an aide-de-camp of the Sultan and son of Ghazi Mukhtar Pasha found it somewhere about the field, and suggested a charge. He was not in command of the cavalry, nor of anything else, but as he had studied in Germany and ought to have known better, the cavalry obeyed him and charged. It charged in column up-hill, against earthworks in front and flank. It was as desperate a piece of heroism as Balaklava—and even more wickedly useless. The loss in men was not very heavy—there were not very many men to lose—but scores of horses were put out of action, and after Velestino the cavalry was even less terrible than before. As

the Greeks, however, while asserting that they had annihilated it, continued to be as much afraid of it as ever, the loss had little effect on the war.

With the Turkish infantry almost untrained and the artillery not much better, the cavalry almost non-existent and the engineers quite so, it seems a wonder indeed that they walked across Thessaly in triumph. But the Turkish soldier is such a marvel of strength and endurance that he could do sapper's work as well as his own and be none the worse for it. He also did the ordnance and transport and ambulance work—and did it wonderfully well, considering that it was none of his business. As far as I could find out, there was no member of the General Staff responsible for the transport. When ammunition or biscuit or fodder was wanted, a battalion of infantry was sent off with a train of pack-ponies and brought it in. Who found out that it was wanted, who decided who should fetch it, whence and whither, I could find no single officer who knew; yet it always came. Elassona was distant seventy to eighty miles from its base on the Salonica-Monastir railway; at first everything had to be brought up on pack-saddles; yet it always came. Later, both in Macedonia and Thessaly, it was possible to replace ponies and infantry battalions by carts and Christians. But at first the transport, though wonderfully efficient in its wonderful way, was a serious drain on the fighting force of the army.

Why, then, were the Turks victorious? Were

their defects of training and organisation redeemed by any brilliant strategical skill? That least of all. "I think Mushir Pasha nice chap," said my dragoman to me in an expansive moment, and so indeed he was—dignified, kindly, humorous, a complete and perfect gentleman. But that does not make a great general. It is, indeed, difficult to judge of Edhem Pasha's performance without the risk of injustice. We were told—by belated English newspapers—that the Sultan had given him a free hand. Yet it is certain that he never went forward faster than the field-telegraph, of which the other end was in the Yildiz. It may be that in Turkey, where personal government is really personal and you will do well not to forget it, a free hand is not quite so free as it is elsewhere. As a general Edhem gave the impression of being sound and safe, but very, very slow. Perhaps it would be kindest to hold that his soundness was all his own, and that when he was slow the telegraph-line from the Yildiz was tugging at his coat-tails. But, after all, Edhem is a Turk, and the Turk has never been distinguished for celerity in the hour of victory. His pace in pursuit has usually been much the same as his pace in retreat, which is not hurried. Whether it be laid to Edhem's charge or the Sultan's it is certain that a prodigious deal of time was wasted in the campaign, and that it was this waste of time which saved the Greek army again and again. After Meluna a whole day was lost before sending down the cavalry to reconnoitre, although they had taken

no part in the battle and were perfectly fresh. After that, at the so-called battle of Mati, the attack was delayed until Hamdi Pasha's division could come up from Karya and outflank the Greek right. Hamdi delayed, and Edhem waited: a partial attack was delivered on April 23rd upon the Greek right in the afternoon, and they bolted unpursued in the night. Had the attack been made in the morning, the Crown Prince's army would have been smashed to pieces by dark. Even the next day there was no pursuit: Larissa was not occupied till the 25th, and even after that there was no pursuit. Torpor ensued. On May 1st Naim Pasha fought the unsuccessful action of Velestino. He fought against orders, and with a force far too weak for his purpose; but for all that the stronger force should have been there—of course it arrived next morning—and with it orders to keep the Greeks on the run. By this time the panic of the Greeks had been checked, and they had talked themselves into self-confidence again. Yet it was not till May 5th that Edhem marched out and beat the Greeks at Pharsala. Here once more defeat should have been rout: that it was not so was due to the incompetence of Hairi Pasha, who should have cut the road to Domokos, and to the incompetence of Edhem Pasha, who did not get his orders obeyed. The Greeks were not even pursued. Upon Pharsala followed inevitably the occupation of Velestino and Volo. But after that—from the 8th to the 17th of May—Edhem did nothing. Bairam was the ex-

cuse; but masters of war take no account of religious festivals, and even Bairam was but four days out of nine. The Greeks were allowed to rest and entrench themselves comfortably, and measure off their ranges at Domokos as they had done at Pharsala. At Domokos the Turks paid with the heaviest day's loss of the war for this and for renewed incompetence on the part of their generals. Once more Edhem tried flanking and cutting the retreat; once more his generals were late, and lazy, and insubordinate; and once more he sat still and allowed himself to be disobeyed. There was only one energetic pursuing movement in the whole war, and that was on the last day of it, when Seyfoullah Pasha attacked the Greek rear-guard in the descent of the Furka Pass. But for the armistice the Turkish cavalry would that day at last have got at the Greeks retreating on the level, with four hours of good daylight before them. And that action was fought without the knowledge and against the wishes of Edhem Pasha.

Why, then, once more, were the Turks victorious? If it was not training, nor organisation, nor generalship, what was it? Simply this: that the Turk is a brave man, while the Greek is otherwise. The Turkish soldier may be badly trained and badly organised and badly led; he remains a splendid soldier. He loves war, and he has a natural turn for it. He can bear without a murmur privations which would kill most Europeans—without even a suspicion that they are hardships at all. He

has no more of the Continental smartness than his officers have of the Continental code of honour; but he can keep at his shambling three miles an hour, in heavy marching order, for ever. He can march all day and fight all night, and be ready for a turn at road-making in the morning. He can receive a bullet through the belly or ripping up his arm from wrist to elbow; he can lie so in the sun all day, ride twenty miles on a pack-saddle into hospital, and when he gets there the difficulty is not so much to cure him as to persuade him that it is worth while getting his clothes off. Life in rural Turkey is poor enough and insecure enough to prevent him from overvaluing it; therefore he will unflinchingly face fire which more civilised men would shrink from. And though the Turk—as opposed, for instance, to the Kurd and the Arab—is not fanatical, he still retains sufficient inborn faith in the Prophet and the Koran to believe that if he is shot by the infidel he will sleep that night in the arms of Houris in Paradise.

The very faults of the Turk work together to the advantage of his soldierliness. If he is the lord of subject populations — which is curiously construed into a crime in him by the owners of India and South Africa—he draws therefrom the consciousness of superiority which makes it impossible for him to run from a Greek. He may retreat, as at Velestino; but he does it very unwillingly, very slowly and defiantly, only praying that the despised enemy may venture down into the plain and follow.

If the Turk is uncivilised, he reaps the compensation of it in his untiring body and his unshaking nerves. If he is dull and unintelligent, he is just for that reason the best disciplined soldier in the world.

The best disciplined soldier in the world! It seems a startling eulogy to select for the Turk of all men—the unspeakable Turk! But it is absolutely true. He is not excitable nor argumentative; he is accustomed to the feeling of superiority, and therefore less liable than other men to become intoxicated with victory or insubordinate in defeat. Consequently he will always obey his officers when they tell him not to burn or plunder. If they do not tell him, he is but a man and a soldier in the enemy's country; he will take anything he may have need of, or indeed anything he thinks he can sell. Wanton damage, beyond this, the real Turk takes little pleasure in; his grave and self-contained nature does not break out in promiscuous smashing and bonfiring like that of the Albanian and of certain Europeans. In the late war it was to the interest of the Turks to behave with humanity, and they did it. It would be unjust to put their moderation and discipline on this ground alone. Most of the officers, so far as I could judge, are as humane, though not as sensitive, as most Europeans; and the common soldier, though he despises the Greek, cherishes no active hostility against the race, as he has lately come to do against the Armenian. But leaving humanity aside, it was the plain and vital

interest of the Turk to be on his best behaviour during the Thessalian campaign. He had correspondents with him who would tell the world if he behaved well, and he knew that he had enemies who would say he behaved badly whatever he did. There was an impression—mistaken as it turns out, at least so far as regards Britain—that he would reap the benefit of good conduct when Europe came to have its say in the terms of peace. There was every inducement to avoid pillage and cruelty; but without the discipline of the common Turk these inducements would have appealed to the higher officers in vain.

But were pillage and cruelty avoided? We have been told that they were not. The press has been drenched with the usual stories of Turkish outrage. We have been told that the correspondents with the Turks were allowed to send no word but what was favourable to the Turks. Wait till they come home unmuzzled, said the friends of Greece, and then you will hear! For all this outcry, I have not yet heard that any European correspondent who went through the campaign with Edhem Pasha's army has felt it necessary to improve the occasion of his unmuzzling by any such stories of Turkish atrocity as seem to have been promised to an awaiting world. The iniquity of the censorship has not yet been laid bare. It is quite true that on the one occasion when I thought it necessary to allude to the want of discipline of certain Albanian irregulars, the despatch was returned, with that passage

neatly scored out in blue pencil. But after all, a censorship is only human, and that, among other things, is what it is for. No other military censorship in the world would have let the thing pass, and only with the Turkish censorship—the unorganised, happy-go-lucky, apologetic Turkish censorship—would it have been worth while to try it. Probably the censor—or, more accurately, the officer who to his distraction was pitched upon as censor for the day—would have crossed out any charges of wholesale incendiarism whenever they were made. But they were not made, because they were not called for.

The Turkish atrocities may be inquired into under three heads—burning, pillage, and worse. Burning there undoubtedly was; and though the sum-total of damage done amounted to wonderfully little, it was more irritating in proportion than any other kind of disorder, because there was no possible profit in it. But to allege, as I understand was done, that the Turks were wantonly burning every village they set foot in, is the grossest of slanders. Going carefully over the map, this is the list of the damage I saw. At Karadere (the Greek Ligaria), at the foot of the Meluna Pass, one or two houses were burned out on the day after the village was occupied. I thought at the time it was done for a military signal; but I doubt whether this was so. The village of Kazaklar, half-way between Meluna and Larissa, was pretty well burned out. When this was done I do not know, as I only saw it in re-

turning. I do not think it was on fire at any time before the taking of Larissa. Neither in Tyrnavos on the day after its capture, nor in Larissa on the day of its capture, was a single house on fire. I saw only one fire in Larissa during the whole war. This was said to be an accident, and I am inclined to believe it. On the other hand, the village of Deliler was almost wholly destroyed on the night of the fight there—whether set afire by shells, by the entering Turks or the retreating Greeks, I do not know: nobody knows on such occasions. After the taking of Larissa, following the course of the fighting, the village in front of Velestino—Rizomylos it appears to be called—was very badly knocked about: as the place was occupied by the Greeks, taken by the Turks, reoccupied by Greek outposts, and then once more occupied by the Turks, the damage was not unnatural. In Velestino itself about one house in four or five was damaged. About Pharsala there were fires after the battle in five villages,—Tatari, Barakli, Sechi, Pasia Magula, and Vasili,—but none of them suffered at all severely except the last two. In Pharsala itself there have been fires in, I should say, about one house in ten: when this was done I cannot say, as I cannot remember seeing any burning during the ten days I was within sight of the place. Southwards towards Domokos I saw a small fire in Hadji Amar as the troops passed through it to the attack of the Greek position. During the same fight huts were burned in Krol-Oba and Purnari. The Turks said that this

had been done by the Greeks as they evacuated, and certainly they were both ablaze an hour or more before the first Turks entered them. In Domokos itself, which probably suffered more severely than any other place of any size, the example of incendiarism was unquestionably set by the Greeks. Flames were rising from the height before dawn, at three or four in the morning. The evacuation, it seems, only began at midnight and I have heard since that an English correspondent, who stayed some hours behind the army, saw with his own eyes Greek irregulars setting fire to houses. It must be admitted that when the Albanian irregulars arrived they followed the example with zeal. I believe the Greeks had begun the conflagration with an old mosque—at any rate there was a charred minaret beside it, and the Turks believed there had been sacrilege. About a third of Domokos was burned out.

The list looks a fairly long one, but the actual damage done was wonderfully small. The ordinary Thessalian village is mainly composed of mud huts, and mud does not burn; possibly the fire even does the sun-dried bricks good. When a village of this kind is burned, it simply means the loss of its lath rafters and the breaking of its tiles—not a ruinous loss even to a peasant. More pretentious buildings, as at Velestino and Domokos, usually only lost their floors and roofs: the light dry wood burned so quickly that in most cases the fire was out before the walls fell in. Of course the smallness of the

loss makes no difference in the guilt—if we are to speak in ridiculous exaggerations—of the Turkish army. It is more pertinent to this point that, except apparently Kazaklar, no single village that I know of suffered by fire except during or immediately after a fight. Turkish troops passed through and halted at dozens of villages in Thessaly, and left everything standing. Without multiplying outlandish names, there are eight along the road from Larissa to Velestino which gave no sign of having been touched as late as May 9th. Even what fires there were were partly accidental: a soldier cooked his coffee near a dry thorn-hedge, and when he went away the blazing hedge spread to the nearest roof. Perhaps all this is enough to show that the accusations of incendiarism have been grossly, as bad as wilfully, overstated. A German correspondent who had been through the Franco-German war told me that the Turks burned beyond comparison less than the Germans.

As for looting, there was next to none of it, for the very sufficient reason that there was next to nothing to loot. People talk vaguely of living on the enemy's country; but when there is nothing left in the enemy's country except green corn and young vines it is not easy, with the best will in the world, to see how it is to be done. A good deal of the corn was cut for fodder, a very few cattle and sheep were found and eaten, and likewise a few fowls. I presume the owners were not paid for this, as the owners had disappeared. But how such

looting as this is to be prevented in war-time those who cry out against pillage have not explained. You might as well expect cavalry to "ware wheat" in a charge. Of loot, other than food, there was hardly any on the market at all. I looted a reel of cotton myself in Pharsala, but I saw nothing more valuable about the place. The only two towns where there was any possibility of plunder were Larissa and Volo, and both were practically untouched. "Practically untouched," of course, does not mean that no soldier took what was not his. Every soldier, I do not doubt, was as anxious to pick up something worth a few piastres as any other soldier of any other nation would have been in the like case. I do not say that nothing was stolen; on the contrary, at Larissa the number of things that disappeared would probably mount up to a good deal. Rifles and bayonets, fuse-boxes, saddles, and camp-beds, of course, do not count: they were military stores; and if anybody has a right to complain that they sometimes came into the hands of European correspondents, it is the Sultan. I do not say there were not other things looted. But I do say, first, that the looting was relatively very little in Larissa, and in Volo, so far as I saw on the day of capture, none at all: and, second, that every possible effort was made to check what looting there was. For the first point, I suppose there were jewellers' shops, curiosity shops, and the like, in Larissa; there must have been jewels and other easily concealed, easily port-

able objects of some value in the possession of inhabitants of the town. And I am quite confident that if any such had been on the market my most efficient dragoman would have known it, and suggested a deal. But there was absolutely nothing of the sort for sale, with the one exception of a cheap reliquary, probably dropped by its owner. Very likely most of the inhabitants of Larissa took their valuables away with them; indeed I saw several families bringing them back again. But I also chanced to go into one or two houses which had been left almost untouched by the owners, and remained so. In any case, wherever the wealth of Larissa went, it was not into the pockets of the Turks.

When the Turks entered the town they placed sentinels at every corner, and at all the houses that looked likely to invite plunder. Many of the principal shops had already been ripped open and gutted by the Greek irregulars and liberated convicts, whose cartridge-cases littered the streets. Two or three days afterwards a swarm of Albanian irregulars arrived, and commenced operations by smashing in and clearing out some shops in the main streets. This ought to have been foreseen, no doubt, but at least the authorities guarded against a repetition of it: while the Arnauts were in the town there was a sentinel to every shop. It was not possible to place a sentinel at every house in the town, and I daresay a good many were broken into, if you can use the word of houses

left wide open inviting entry. But I think any fair judge who saw the Turkish officers will admit that they did their best to stop such things. Offenders were never let go unpunished: several were imprisoned, some were flogged, more were informally slashed across the face with riding-whips after the Turkish manner. Seyfoullah Pasha, who was Governor, organised a civil police to help keep order, out of the Mussulman, Jewish, and Christian inhabitants. I regret to say that one of the first consequences was that a Christian was discovered by the Governor himself in the attempt to take up a fellow-Christian's bed and walk. It was not the best testimony to the prudence of the mixed gendarmery system, but I can bear personal witness to the energy with which Seyfoullah thrashed the mixed gendarme. Night and day this excellent officer was always about the streets, and there were others hardly less energetic. In a word, the will to loot—without violence—was present with the Turk, as with all soldiers: it was repressed by the officers, not entirely, but probably with as much success as has ever been seen with any conquering army in the world.

Beyond such military peccadilloes as a little burning and loot, the Turks committed no outrage worth mentioning at all. I saw one dead peasant, and heard of one other. I cannot say that these were all that died: no one man could see everything that was done. But when a man goes through a campaign, wandering about pretty much as he likes,

he can be sure that if there had been much killing of peasants he would have seen more of it. Moreover, it must be remembered that the Greek Government had armed large numbers of peasants, who followed their army as irregulars: it is possible that the dead men had been playing the *franc-tireur*. I saw several disarmed peasants among the prisoners; and they were not shot, when taken, as they would have been in the West, but of course they would have been killed if they were encountered under arms. I never saw a Turkish soldier strike or ill-use a Greek in town or country. As for the ravishings and tortures of which we hear so much when there are no Europeans to corroborate or deny them, I saw absolutely no trace of such. There were not many women left in the Greek villages, but there were some; there were also Jewish women in Larissa, and droves of Gipsies hung round the army on its march. I heard of no incivility offered to any of these. Again, this does not prove that there was no incivility; but I think it does prove that there cannot have been much.

Taking it all together, I am inclined to doubt very much whether any army in an enemy's country ever came nearer to irreproachability of discipline than the Turks in Thessaly. Judged by the laws of war set up by the most civilised nations in time of peace, it is probable that a pretty long list of misdemeanours might be made out against them. But then those laws were never rigidly observed by any army that I ever heard of. For the most

part the breaches of them are tacitly and very properly condoned by those who inform the stay-at-home public as to the progress of wars. There is nothing to be gained by informing the public that men who are patterns of virtue and propriety in peace, tend towards raw savagery in war; the public accordingly is not informed. As long as war lasts men will be different in war from their other selves in peace. This may not be to war's credit; but there are quite enough excellent people working ineffectively for the abolition of war already to make it unnecessary to insist on this additional argument. Unless it had been Turks who were engaged in this late campaign, we should not have heard a word of excesses. Because they were Turks there seems to have grown up a new theory concerning this war—to wit, that a nation which engages in war and is beaten has a right to complain when it suffers any inconvenience that is not with it in time of peace. How universal still is the reign of cant in this country may be judged from some of the arguments of those who hold this new-fangled theory. One writer speaks of "looting" Greek cartridges and cannon. Others cry out because the Greeks are like to lose the harvest of Thessaly, as if war were a kind of hunt expected to bear in mind the interests of the farmer. We shall next hear of war as a football-match, with umpires to blow a whistle if anybody steals an egg, and award the other side a penalty cannon-shot. One authority has already gone so far as to find it

merest justice that the pecuniary losses of the Greeks should be put on the other side against the war indemnity. That the conquerors should be presented with the bill of the conquered—thereby almost inevitably finding a heavy balance against themselves—is indeed a new view of the ethics of war, and it is small wonder that the Greeks should loot their own towns and burn their own villages if it is to be the law of Europe.

To sum up this rambling commentary on what happened in Thessaly, it comes to little enough. It has not provided the world with any unexpected truths either about the art of war or about the Eastern question. A badly led army which will stand up to be shot at beats a badly led army which will not: that we could have predicted. The Turkish army is not a negligible quantity, which nobody not utterly ignorant and crack-brained ever thought it was; yet neither is it that prodigy of modern science and organisation which some people rashly took it for on the strength of its easy successes. The Turk is very much what he was before—a rude, strong, good-humoured, unrefined, half-barbarian man, who can endure, and fight, and obey orders. The Greek is what he was—a dishonest, intelligent, chicken-hearted talker, whom nothing apparently will deprive of Britain's sympathy as long as he quotes Byron and lives in the land of Alcibiades. And neither Turk nor Greek can speak the truth; which makes it the more deplorable that so few Europeans are found to speak the truth about them.

THE MONOTYPE.[1]

It is so complete and provident, foreseeing every difficulty and surmounting it, aware of every advantage and seizing it, that you can hardly help feeling it to be a portent, inexplicable, born out of season, without father or mother. or beginning of days.

Yet, though its inventor is a statistician, who came upon it not through the study of printing, but in the devising of calculating machines, the monotype, like every seeming prodigy, is the issue of a long development, the offspring of a hundred ancestors. Revolution is the child of evolution in printing as everywhere else.

The machine looks modest, and, to anybody capable of understanding machines, very simple. It stands perhaps 4 feet high, it is 3 feet 8 inches long by 3 feet broad, and it weighs only 900 lbs. It requires very little power to drive it. The buzz of its driving-belt and the click, click of the work it is doing hardly makes itself heard at your ear above the clatter of Leadenhall Street. Altogether it is one of the least ostentatious machines that ever made a revolution. But if you look at it closer and realise what it is doing, that machine is one of the greatest marvels of all the marvelous history of

[1]New Review, November, 1897.

machinery, the crown of over five centuries' development in the most vital of all civilising arts. The machine is casting and setting type all by itself—setting it, too, more regularly, more clearly, more cheaply, and more untiringly than written words have ever been set before.

Click, click, click; and with each click a fire-new, shining letter slides out into its place in a line of print. Click, click, click, till a line is finished; the line slides up into its place in a column, and the machine, before you have finished watching the line fall in, has pushed out nearly half the next. Nobody is touching it—nobody telling it what to say. It just goes on clicking out words and words, thoughts and thoughts. It is the most human of all machines and the most inhuman. It is human in its seemingly self-suggested intelligence, inhuman in its deliberate yet unresting precision. Unprompted and unchecked, it might be clicking out life-giving truth or devilish corruption, and clicking it out forever.

Its full name is the Lanston monotype machine; its familiars call it briefly the monotype. It is almost a relief—so much you are hypnotised by the apparent spontaneity of the thing—to learn that it is not saying just what it likes; that it is, after all, like other machines, man's servant. There is a paper roll being unwound and re-wound on the top of it, punched with holes in various positions like the drum of a musical box, which is telling it what to say. There is a kind of tank where from

time to time it must be fed with metal to cast its types from. But within these limitations its activity is only bounded by the time required for each type to cool; give it words to set and metal to set them with, and it will go on unaided till you like to stop it.

To get a vague idea of its working you must begin with the perforated roll. There is a keen-faced, clean-shaven young man in spectacles working what appears to be a typewriter in one corner of the room: that is the captain of the setting machine, and the man is the captain of that. The two parts make really one machine, and yet the one is perfectly independent in place or time of the other.

The machine's master begins by setting an index: the index fixes the length of the line required. Then he begins playing on the keys as with a typewriter; only each key, instead of writing a letter, punches two round holes in the roll. So he taps letter after letter till he has punched a word; then he taps a space and on to the next word. Presently, when he is coming to the end of a line, a bell rings. You notice a semi-circular dial, just above the bank of keys, with a pointer traveling across it. The bell means this: the line has now progressed so far that another syliable would fill it too full. You must now "justify," as printers call it—that is, equalise the space between the words of the line. The monotype's method of doing this is, perhaps, the most beautiful of all its beauties. There is a registering scale which has been following all the movements

of the operator: it now reveals on the dial, first, how much space is over, to be divided equally among the spaces between the words; and second, the number of spaces between the words among which the residuary space is to be divided. Say there is one-tenth of an inch over and there are ten spaces: an addition of one-hundredth of an inch to each will justify the line. To do such a thing by hand means time and distraction of attention, and probably inaccuracy after all; to the monotype it is child's play. The operator simply taps a key which punches yet another hole in the ribbon. When the ribbon comes to control the setting machine, that hole ensures that the word-spaces shall be just one-hundredth above normal size, and the line will be justified with absolute mathematical exactness. When the ribbon is punched full it is lifted off the key-board and fixed on to the casting and setting machine. The holes in it correspond mathematically with a set of dies comprising all the characters and symbols used in type-setting. These are carried in a case mounted on a compound slide, the parts of which move at right angles. Air is shot through these holes by a pneumatic tube, and the force brings the die required under a jet of molten metal. The metal is forced into the mould, the type is cast and shot out into the galley. The whole thing comes out hind part before and upside down; the justifying holes at the ends of each line are thus the first to come under the observation of the machine, which casts all the space-

types of the lines accordingly. If there is a mistake as to the length of the line, the monotype refuses. It stops dead; the minder puts the error right, and the sagacious creature starts on again. When the whole galley is set, a proof is pulled and corrected in the ordinary way; each type is an individual, so there is no need of re-casting. When the type is done with it can either be retained for use, being every bit as good as foundry type, or melted up and used over again. By reason of its facilities for changing the measure of lines, and its accuracy of justification, the monotype can set tabular matter and over-run illustrations better than this can be done by hand. It is the only machine which can make full use of capitals and italics as supplied in a full fount of type. Other machines can produce but 100 characters with a hundred different movements: it can produce 225 with thirty. To cut technicalities, the monotype can do everything that printing can ask. It is the child of evolution. Since very early in the century machinery has fought the compositor; and though the man has kept his head up hitherto, like the man he is, it was certain that in the end he must go down. Not down altogether, of course, but down as a hand-compositor: a man's a man, and will earn his bread whether he trims sails or stokes furnaces, whether he picks types out of a box into a stick or sits on a seat and hits keys. But the earliest efforts of machinery left the compositor by hand still easy master of the situation.

There have been two main families of these,

which may conveniently be styled the spout kind and the wheel kind. The original begetter of the first, Dr. Church, was an American, like Mr. Lanston to-day; the inventors who brought it into practice, Young and Delcambre, were, again like him, not professional printers. Their machine, once more like its triumphant descendant of to-day, started with a key-board; the types were lying in grooves according to their kinds, and a touch on the key released the first in the groove. The letters, successively released, were conducted through devious passages, which finally all united in the spout. Thence they issued in an endless line; a second operator sat at the end of the spout to cut them up into lengths as they emerged, and justify the lines so made. It was magnificent, but it did not work. Types are more unruly than those who know them only as printed letters usually conceive. An *m* and an *i*, for instance are of very different sizes and very different weights. The spout had to be broad enough for *m*, and so *i* slewed round and stuck in the middle, and had to be pried out with a bodkin; meanwhile, portly *m* was emerging with a thud into the receiver and ricochetting into the inane. Sometimes the operator at the key-board operated too fast, and then while *m* and *i* were struggling through their tunnels, *g* came bounding along and slipped in at the junction before them. If the type was sticky or the passages damp all these things became worse. So that the

spout type of machine, though not unused, never conquered the human hand.

The wheel type was born in 1858, its inventor being a journalist, Dr. Mackie. In this family the types were arranged round a wheel—whether a disc or a grooved revolving pillar—which is spun round and arranged so that the right type stops opposite the receiver and slides in. Despite the irrelevant suggestions of Monte Carlo and the Buddhist praying-machine, this was a much faster and more practical kind of machine than the other. But even this found difficulties in working. It wore away the feet of the type in the grooves, so that they went "off their feet," as the phrase is, and you cannot take a type's shoes off and turn it out to grass. A type is not a butterfly either; but it can be broken on a wheel, and often is, in this kind of machine. The wheel machine, from these and other causes, was very expensive, and the human hand remained undismayed.

It was a different matter when the linotype arrived. This machine may be said to mark the transition from old to new, for it gave up the struggle with insubordinate, jamming, breaking types, and cast its own type as it went along. The operator taps his key, and the tap releases a die and brings it into place. The line when set is justified by driving up widening steel wedges between the words. The molten metal is injected into the line of dies, forming a bar of type representing the line. This bar must be trimmed, and then it is ready to

take its place in the galley. The dies are mechanically conveyed back to their own place. This machine was plainly a very great advance. It saved the labour involved in justification and the distribution of types, after being used, into their proper cases ready for use again. It saved cost of type, wear and tear of plant, and especially floor space. Its victory was neither immediate nor complete, for reasons which will appear in a moment; but, for the first time, it established an advantage for the machine over the hand.

Thus was the way prepared for the crowning achievement of the monotype. If it appears inferior in speed to the lintoype because it involves the separate operations with the key-board and the casting-and-setting machine, it takes its revenge in the quality of the printing, in the range of its characters, in economy, and in convenience. The types are clean cut and deep in the shoulder, as it is called, so that they offer the promise of the very clearest and finest impression. The dies, being held in rows in a square case, require mechanical movements equal to only double the square root of their total number. If there are 225 characters —fifteen rows of fifteen apiece—there are fifteen horizontal and fifteen perpendicular movements to bring the dies under the jet of metal, or thirty in all. So with forty movements you could use 400 characters; with fifty, 625. The linotype needs a separate mechanical movement for each character: this necessarily limits the number of characters em-

ployed, and therewith—as, for instance, by the exclusion of italics—the range and attractiveness of the printing. In point of economy the monotype requires less labour than any other machine. Eight expert key-board operators can punch rolls enough to keep ten machines going; one man can feed and mind ten. That means nine men to ten complete machines—a complete machine run by a decimal fraction of a man! With this and other economies the cost of production works out roughly at something like one-quarter of that of hand-work. But perhaps the most attractive vista of possibility before the monotype is opened by the separability of its parts. Small printers can combine in the purchase and upkeeping of a casting machine, each having his own key-board and sending its rolls to the central depot to be cast at leisure. This same roll can be stored away and kept to infinity.

It is virtually printed matter, and ready to go on the machine and come out in type at any moment. With other methods, whether linotype, wheel, spout, or hand, if you want to preserve matter—say for the second edition of a book—you must store away the type itself, taking up space for which you must pay rent, and spending money on stereotype plates on which you lose the interest. With the monotype you just put away the rolls on a shelf. When you want to reprint you take down the rolls, put them on the machines, leave a man sitting up to feed them, and go to bed; when you wake up the monotype has done the rest.

In this light the apparent slowness involved in the separate parts of the monotype turns out a real gain in speed. All other setting machines are limited in their capacity by the endurance of their human operators. Imagine a press of work: when your linotypists are tired out you must let your machine stand idle while they sleep; your monotypists in the meantime, with their whole attention fixed on the mental processes of the key-board, with no distraction to the mechanical processes of the casting, may be presumed to have held out longer, at higher pressure, to have punched more than the other men have linotyped. When they go home to bed the casting machine will click serenely on all night; it wants no food but copy and metal, and no sleep at all.

And now for the most wonderful dream of all. No compositor at all, but every author his own printer! If the divine fire can be struck out on the keys of a typewriter, why not on the keys of a monotype? The sage of the future will unlade his wisdom in the form of little round holes in a brown-paper roll. He will send down the roll to his editor or publisher: it will be put on the machine, and the machine will turn it out in print without the touch of any hand but his own. If this can be, our valued friend the compositor turns out only a superfluous middleman after all. His profit must be cut off: he must go. After all, in this literary age, it is increasingly easy for him to become a popular author—a profession sometimes

cleaner than his present one, and very often better paid.

Still, there will always remain one place for the compositor: he will make the author's corrections in the columns which the monotype has set up. The linotype abolishes the cost of corrections by abolishing the corrections themselves, and therewith incidentally abolishing literature also. In theory, correction is possible with it: it sets its type in solid lines, and if you want to add or subtract a comma, the whole line must be set over again. In practice, the re-setting and re-casting of the whole line means too much trouble and time and expense; therefore the comma is not corrected, and bad work is the result. The reader is annoyed or confused or misled by mistakes, or else he is taught to believe that in the art of writing trifles don't matter. The writer is forced to acquiesce in the same heresy. He must not revise and correct, and in time, by dint of seeing many scandalous blunders in his work, learns to accept blunders in spelling, in grammar, in style, as a necessary condition of literature—of which disease literature must eventually die.

You who have seen your noblest sentiments, your most resounding phrases, pass under the harrow of the linotype will confess that this is no exaggeration. The linotype made for bad writing: the monotype, giving out work as easy of correction as hand-set types, if it does not make directly for good writing, at least it does not make against

it. It does affirmatively make for good printing. In the meantime, it is permitted to welcome a machine which, whilst, like most of its breed, it makes life swifter and more exciting, does not, like many, leave it uglier than it found it.

MR. BALFOUR'S PHILOSOPHY.[1]

An attempt to estimate the philosophical value of such a book as Mr. Balfour's 'Foundations of Belief' in the pages of a finite magazine is beset by at least one unhappy difficulty. Dissent from its conclusions has the show of misappreciation of its merits. Let it be insisted at once, therefore, that though to many men the final conclusions of this treatise will be unsatisfying, and some of its tributary arguments unconvincing, there is no man that can afford to disdain it. No truth is the whole truth, and no sincere quest after truth can end in total disappointment. It is a commonplace that man learns most from those with whom he least agrees, and this is especially so with a thinker so keenly sensitive to the philosophic atmosphere of the hour as Mr. Balfour. *Je mcprise Locke,* said Schelling; but Locke had been long enough in his coffin to justify the liberty. Nowadays we are all pretty unanimous in misprizing Schelling; but Mr. Balfour is either to be hailed as a saviour or approached warily as a dangerous if illuminative heretic. The enemy he attacks is the established philosophic church of the day: it has been attacked, and indeed overthrown, in its earlier incarnations, but the bare fact of its resuscitation points the

[1]New Review, March, 1895.

necessity of a new onslaught. Naturalism—there is no need to depart from Mr. Balfour's own term; it passes variously under the aliases of Positivism and Agnosticism, and may most handily be described as the creed of Mr. Herbert Spencer—fights to-day with the new weapon of Evolution; it was necessary that the weapon should be turned against it. This Mr. Balfour has done with an unsparing trenchancy, a dazzling deftness of dialectical fence, a subtlety of distinction, and a power of epigram and of eloquence far surpassing any of its original masters. He has hewn Naturalism asunder and riddled it to shreds, and overthrown it and trampled on it; and if he has not slain it outright, the one reason is that its professors are not open to philosophic conviction. For, indeed, the creed was never at any time a philosophy, nor expounded by philosophers. Its gospellers are either, like Professor Huxley, investigators of science who have strayed beyond their province, or anti-theological gladiators like Mr. Frederick Harrison, or else, like Mr. Herbert Spencer, they have mistaken generalisations in natural science for the nearest human possibilities of absolute truth. Such as Naturalism was, Mr. Balfour leaves it without a rag to cover its speculative nakedness. Starting out to explain the world without any ultimate principle of personality, it cannot give a coherent account of one single moment of human experience. Let that be said once for all; let any one to whom it sounds treasonable read the first chapter of the Second

Part once for all. But it will be more profitable for the estimate of the book as a whole to review it rather from the aspect of its constructive parts. "In order that the views here advocated," we are told at the outset, "may be seen in the highest relief, it is convenient to exhibit them against the background of some other and contrasted system of thought." Convenient it is, no doubt; but is it quite fair to judge the stability of any body of conclusions by so shaky a structure as Naturalism? Is not the foil too dull for a fair valuation of the gem? Will it not be better, in fine, to take Mr. Balfour's contentions on their merits, and inspect them against the background of any more plausible theory that their analysis may afford?

Logically, Mr. Balfour's argument begins—and, for that matter, ends, as we shall see later—in "the ineffaceable incongruity between the origin of our beliefs, in so far as these can be revealed to us by science, and the beliefs themselves." But for this compendium we have to wait until the last chapter: the actual order of statement is rather morphological than logical: it proceeds as the theory would grow up in the theorist's own mind rather than in conformity with the conveniences of exposition. We begin—not altogether without reminiscence of the maxim, "Abuse plaintiff's attorney"—with an examination of the Naturalistic accounts of morality, æsthetics, and epistemology. Viewing these generically he finds that, while the evolutionary process was their origin, they are far from being its

ends. They are merely accidents in its course—backwaters lying off the perpetual and universal stream of the world's tendency. Bastards of the struggle for life, they can claim no dignity of their own and cherish no hope of perpetuity when once they have served their turn. They came into the world as devices, subservient to the continued existence of man; they will go out of it in the inevitable day when they no longer minister to it. Is this a creed for self-respecting men? asks Mr. Balfour. Can belief and feeling continue to co-exist in such intolerable antagonism? Possibly not; though we must remember such jars are oftener composed by mutual accommodation than by the utter destruction of one or other of the jarring partners. Yet, spite of this, the argument seems largely irrelevant and doubtfully valid. It is not the habit of the philosopher to ask first whether this or that is pleasant to believe, but whether it is true. And, supposing that it is true, is it, after all, so humiliating? Amœba man was and automaton he shall be, says Mr. Balfour, half-dead to know that he must die. But, even so, it is our present, not our past or future, that concerns us. Mr. Balfour calls it humour "to prevent us assuming any airs of superiority over other and more powerful members of the same family of phenomena more permanent than ourselves." Yet surely this invocation of humour is but a back-handed argument. Even on the crassest Naturalistic view, humour is a more ingenious and

complicated conjunction of atoms than heat. If the phenomena could laugh back it would be different. But while I can laugh at them, it troubles me little that in a few billions of years they may perhaps reduce my *n*th grandson to the same unlaughing molecules as themselves.

Human activities, it may thus be argued, have their dignity in their exercise, as determined by such rough approximation as we can make, through their structure, to their function in the world. To some tempers, at least, human life, with all its diverse equipments and possibilities, is an end in itself. If there is anything worthy the knowing and feeling and doing, it remains worthy so long as evolution allows man to remain capable of it. And is our doom, after all, so inevitable? No doubt all that makes man human was evolved, in the beginnings, by accident. The struggle for life first made us moral and æsthetical and rational, in order that we might be better adapted animals. But that was only in the very beginning. Here, as elsewhere, Mr. Balfour appears to confuse the source of a thing with the thing itself. For with the dawn of consciousness begins a fresh struggle, whose sphere is in consciousness alone—the struggle of ideals, the struggle of ideas. This is grafted on to the old struggle for bare life, and partly supersedes it. Just as the struggle first entered into the world with organic life, this new mental struggle began with consciousness. Ideas fight for survival in the mind as men fight for survival in

the outer world, and the former fight reacts on the latter. It is to this purely intellectual struggle that we owe, and shall owe, all the more complex developments of æsthetics, thought, and morality. Whence otherwise comes the power that makes men give up their bread for their art, the hope of posterity for learning, life itself for their country? The primeval will to live becomes modified into the will to live in such-and-such a way: we enrich our conception of life with certain minimum requirements of virtue and refinement. Artificial selection begins to replace natural. As years go on, this struggle within the mind will be more and more. Amœbæ we were, it is true; but on this view we look back on our ancestry with the juster pride of him who has risen from below rather than of him who, at the most, has not fallen. And if the phenomena kill us off in the end, at least we shall perish in the bloom.

The Naturalist is hardly in a position to put forward such a suggestion as the foregoing. But we have given up the Naturalist and are trying Mr. Balfour's contentions for ourselves, so that we may derive from it a hope that, even with a Naturalistic origin, things are not quite so desperate with us as he would have us think. He now leaves this quasi-ethical region and proceeds to attack Naturalism as a philosophy. This chapter is a model of destructive analysis, brilliant and sound, subtle and perspicuous. He demonstrates beyond all power of refutation, or even of reply, that the hypothesis

of Materialism—for it is to Materialism that, in the limit, Naturalism always comes—cannot state coherently the simplest facts of our experience. This part of the book, therefore, we might pass by but for one discussion which may come in usefully later. In his analysis of Naturalism, piling refutation on refutation, Mr. Balfour takes occasion to make some criticisms of sense-perception. In an immediate experience by sense-perception—Mr. Balfour's example is a tree—"the scientific man knows very well that the material object only resembles his idea of it in certain particulars—extension, solidity, and so forth—and that in respect of such attributes of colour and illumination there is no resemblance at all." Here, then, argues he, is a break-down in the Naturalist's means of knowledge, which can only be explained by the hypothesis that these immediate experiences, on which he depends for all his knowledge, "are merely mental results of cerebral changes; all else is a matter of inference." So that we are confronted by the horrible cataclysm that Naturalism regards the world thus, while her ally, Science, works only on the assumption that it has an independent material existence. As against Naturalism the hit is palpable. But to those who believe that the explanation of the world must rest on the percipient self as well as on the percept—and the point is already fair, since Mr. Balfour has told us that "there is no theoretical escape from the ultimate 'I'"—it need beget no suspicion of our trusty

friends, the senses. To the perceiving mind the tree is a tree, however science may analyse it. You may call it, if you will, an extended solid object *plus* vibrations, ethereal undulations, absorption of most part of the same, reflection of the green residue, incidence on the eye, arrangement on the retina, stimulation of the optic nerve, and molecular change in the cerebral hemispheres. But in the long-run it is more convenient to call it a green tree, and in the theory of knowledge it is just as correct. The doubt as to the objective existence of the material world, which Mr. Balfour is continually raising, is equally irrelevant. As it is the earliest of metaphysical problems to suggest itself, so it is the first to be dissipated. In reality, the problem has no meaning at all. Whether our perceptions represent independent objects or cerebral changes makes no sort of difference either in speculation or practice. In either case they are equally independent of and complementary to the percipient subject. In a later chapter (the first of Part IV.) Mr. Balfour returns to this subject. Ingeniously deriving our unqualified belief in sense-perceptions from the undoubted benefit such a belief would confer in an early stage of the struggle for existence, he argues thence that though this belief is "more inevitable and universal" than, for example, the belief in God, it is not more worthy. He nowhere clearly lays down any canon of the worthiness of beliefs, nor is it altogether clear how this should be done: up to now the worthiness of

a belief has been generally held to be determined by its truth. The belief in God can hardly be worthier because it has to do with a higher human function; for higher must mean more specific to man—there being no question of the morality of beliefs, as such—and nothing is more specific to man than thought, of which sense-perception is a vital element. Nor is it a matter of "faith"—or inference, as many would prefer to call it—since that enters into both. Nor of the inevitable allowance for error, since this is at least as great in theological beliefs as in perceptions, from which theology is ultimately derived; and neither the last nor the first link in a coherent chain of thought is any worthier than the other. So that we may approach the next division of the subject with our confidence still unimpaired—remembering always the small allowance for physiological or inferential errors—in what remains the primary coin in the currency of thought.

And now rises before us the fair formless form of the Transcendental Ego. Duly Mr. Balfour deduces the portentous abstraction from the possibility of sentient experience. And you would suppose that with this and sense-perception as yet remaining to all but the Materialist, even fastidious he would begin to construct. But no! He continues his wild iconoclastic career. He brushes aside the theories of those who, by the aid of "ideas of relation," would constitute the world of objects out of the subject self; for does not the subject owe

its metaphysical existence to the very objects it thus complacently proceeds to beget? So with the sinister souls that dare elevate the abstract Ego into the Divine: how can you venerate, as the God of love, a creature of metaphysics whose whole being is summarised in the fact that it is not an object of sense? But there remains a third possibility. Take the objective world and the abstract self as two: can they not figure out a universe between them? Mr. Balfour does not smile upon this possibility. He does not find, for instance, that causation is to be deduced from these elements with due inexorability. But what, ultimately, is causation? Popularly the cause of anything is that on which it inevitably follows; more thoughtfully stated, it is that without which it cannot exist. Then what is the cause, let us say, of a drawing-room fire? It follows inevitably (when properly conducted) on the application of a match; without the match it could not exist. But is the match the only thing that fulfils the definition? Could the fire exist without the materials of which it is itself composed, without the human agency that placed these in position, without the oxygen in the air? Come a step farther: on this showing, is not the soil in which the wood grew, is not the man that cut it down, and the father that begat him, and the settled social state that allowed his father to devote a peaceful mind to the propagation of a son,—are not all these things as much the cause of the fire in the drawing-room as is the match? And could

not the list be extended for ever and for ever until nothing that is known to man were omitted? We come to this conclusion, then: that the cause of each thing is everything else. Unless everything else were as it is, each thing could not be as it is. And that fact—the fact that the whole system works together to each of its resultants—is what we call the Uniformity of Nature. Nature cannot but be uniform, seeing that nothing is added nor taken away, and all that there is of her is concentrated in each one of her processes. Now, is not the Transcendental Ego competent to have knowledge of this system? To suppose an abstract principle cognisant of cause sounds at first an assumption audacious and unwarrantable. But the process sketched, viewed more narrowly, is mere matter of addition and subtraction. Hath not a Transcendental Ego memory and comparison, perception of presence and absence in phenomena, and a unity of accumulated truth? By the hypothesis it has all this. All this is just what it is for, just what it is. May we not, then, disallow Mr. Balfour's objection on the score of causation?

Through the Ego and phenomena, therefore, we rise to a bilateral conception of the world. On the one side is the self, on the other its objects, which the self is able to schematise into a system of interdependent relations which exert a uniform pressure on any one point. It is true that this conception does not top the summit of the philosophic ideal. Philosophy, to have her heart's

desire, must needs envisage the world as manifestation of one principle, not two. Yet we might rest in this dualism with a very tolerable provisional satisfaction if nothing better can be attained. It is true that this compromise cannot be any satisfaction to those who were set on regarding the self as the index of God. Mr. Balfour himself very cogently hints, if he does not explicitly demonstrate, why this is not so. The self is not God, and the related system of its objects is not God. Each depends on the other, and God must be Absolute. If there is to be any Absolute, it must be found in the fusion of the two, in the whole of which they are the related parts. But such an Absolute is beyond relation, and therefore beyond human knowledge, which is itself a relation; the part can have no cognisance of the whole. So that this Absolute, this God, is unknown and unknowable to man; it is merely another Thing-in-Itself, unmeaning and null. The theory, indeed, summarily expressed, justifies the statement that there is no God. But that is no objection to the theory. We started on it, not to find a God at any cost, but to find what there was to be found. One more objection to this view Mr. Balfour alleges, and this is a more head-splitting one than the others. The Ego as we have deduced it is a mere knowing-machine. But the self we live with—the Empirical Ego of the psychologist—is one that feels and mourns and extends itself over body and legs and toes. Now we cannot say that this

self is the Ego, because it is the object of the Ego's perceptions. Nor can we conscientiously say that our past and our feelings and our body are no more ourself than our chair or our table. Here, then, is the problem of self-consciousness, perhaps impossible of solution, and certainly so within any possible limits. It is the less pressing because for metaphysics the Transcendental Ego is all the self we want. For empirical psychology the self is mainly cerebral changes; for ethics it is the sense of freedom. Much criticism might be directed upon Mr. Balfour's objections to Determinism, though they are not, in the main, novel. But again we must pass on, merely marking down that we have, in this Dualistic-Idealistic theory, a skeleton reconciliation of the world, unhinged, it is true, at one important joint, and in much need of supplementing in every member. Still, it seems a beginning, and we can but wonder what better Mr. Balfour has to offer to us.

Mr. Balfour, meanwhile, is discursively driving the Juggernaut of his dialectic over most of the guides that mankind has looked to for truth. Sense-perception we have tried above to patch together again; later, language as an accurate vehicle of thought goes down before him, as it must before anybody that cares to tilt hard enough at it. Next he comes to consider the rival claims of reason and authority. It is an admirably perspicuous chapter, though again not conspicuously novel. To such as plume themselves over-

much on their rationality it will be somewhat disquieting to see exposed in black and white before them the infinite smallness of that portion of their judgments which is based immediately on reason. No man, indeed, has any direct concern with reason except the philosopher who puzzles after principles or the plain man who attempts rarely, and with halting casuistry, to apply them. Infinitely small, if we rest the calculation on the bare number of judgments each puts down to its score, is reason's part. But when Mr. Balfour argues that authority is more characteristic of man than reason, is he not misled by this purely irrelevant consideration of the number of judgments into which each enters? He admits that both are necessary to intellectual life; why, then, put either above the other? Nothing can be more than essential. Moreover, if either is to take precedence over the other, there are some good grounds for urging that it should be reason. Authority cannot move a step without it, for even the acceptance of authority means a latent syllogism: "It must be true, for Huxley says so, and he knows." Moreover, in every statement that is taken on authority there exists the reasoning by which it was arrived at, held in solution, and capable of being re-reasoned would a man but take the trouble. Reason is there, but you must call for it. Unless Mr. Balfour postulate an infallible source of inspiration, every dictum of authority must be in its original statement the work of reason. And if he does

so postulate, then he must either justify his postulate by reason or else ask us to take him for an infallible source of inspiration in himself.

Mr. Balfour has now examined various forms of belief in three aspects—by the light of their consequences, their reasons, and their causes. He has found their consequences deplorable, their reasons fallacious, their causes misunderstood. This can hardly apply to Naturalistic beliefs solely, for he proceeds thence to draw his deductions as positive truth, and indeed he cannot have written a book with the same ambition of producing a better creed than Naturalism. So far, then, as these forms of belief go, they promise man a mean life and a contemptible death, they will not bear an examination of their rational foundation, and they rest on such alien causes as authority and the misapprehension of terms. With such modifications as the foregoing discussions may have brought into this view, we may now follow him as he advances from this shifting ground to the deduction of the Deity. Let it be imputed to him for courage that the sand shifts beneath him, since he is not of those who shipwreck reason and call in God from heaven to set up the world again. His attempt is to deduce the existence of God by mental process; it is an argument "from needs to their satisfaction." This curious process, hitherto unknown to logicians—and whatever just deductions Mr. Balfour may make from the validity of logic, he can hardly argue in any other medium—

appears to be of a quasi-transcendental character. As the necessities of certain beliefs about the sensible world lead us to the deduction of the self, so the necessities of beliefs about the universe as a whole lead us to the deduction of a God. We cannot get rid of our difficulties about the world, but by "the presupposition that *it* was the work of a rational Being who made it intelligible, and at the same time made *us,* in however feeble a fashion, able to understand it." In a feeble fashion, indeed, it would seem, since it is just this lack of understanding that drives Mr. Balfour to postulate his rational Being. The first criticism that suggests itself is not recondite. If we are to be justified in such assumptions by a mere defect of understanding, are there not a thousand other assumptions equally plausible? I might compose all my perplexities by postulating that I made the world when I was a baby, and conduct it while I am asleep. But it is doubtful if this view would command any wide measure of support.

Once more: consider what is meant by a need. Is the need that compels the belief in God of the same nature as the need that forces us to the belief in the material world? Mr. Balfour asserts that it is not less stringent. If he means our belief in the materiality of the world, that is true. But belief in the material world, in the proper significance of the term—bearing in mind the fact that it is all one whether the material world is or is not represented by anything beyond cerebral processes—is an ut-

terly different thing. From this we cannot escape: unless we believe, with reasonable deductions, what we see and hear, we cannot even begin to know or to act. We could not live in the world a moment without it. But the need for the belief in God means no more, at the most, than that without it we cannot know all that we can imagine ourselves as knowing, that we cannot do right so continuously as we can imagine ourselves as doing. On the face of it, then, this argument from need to its satisfaction is an illicit one: the need is not such as to drive us, as a primordial condition of human existence, to satisfy it with a stable belief. We have every call to make our own lives coherent, but what call have we to make the universe coherent by aid of the first hypothesis that comes to hand? The belief in God is not truly a need at all, unless omniscience and perfection be needs: men think loyally, and feel proportionately, and act rightly without it every day. And why should they not? For consider the nature of satisfaction of which Mr. Balfour's need is capable. He feels it as a need, because he cannot explain the world, and cannot feel assured of right action without it. But can he know and act any better with it? Not one jot. The intellectual problems that were dark before are dark still; the moral quagmires are as desperately trackless as ever they were. Nor could it be otherwise. For what compels us to leave our philosophies half-finished on the roadside, and entangles us in inextricable mazes about the smallest action

that may be good or bad, is not ignorance of general principles but of particular facts. The science is always there, but we want the omniscience. Now from the belief in God can proceed no knowledge of the unnumbered accidental circumstances of life. Therefore there comes from it no increase of knowledge or certitude of goodness. No: the need is no need, and the satisfaction is no satisfaction. All that this faith can do is to instil a comfortable confidence in the origin of the world as an alien auxiliary to knowledge, and in its guidance as an alien auxiliary to morals. The most that could result from it would be the statement, "There is a God," grateful as a consolation but worthless as a truth. And confidence answers not to a need, but to a hope. But it is not competent even for this. It is no more possible for hope to realise the future, than for remorse to annihilate the past.

But let us assume the reality of the need and its satisfaction. Let us further assume that the conception of God as creator and guide is its one possible satisfaction. Of what nature is the conception thus secured? Clearly, as the result of a transcendental process, the conception is governed by the conditions that gave it birth. The transcendental self is an abstract principle unifying the disconnected phenomena presented in sensitive experience. Even so, this transcendental deity is an abstract principle unifying the phenomena presented by the intellectual and moral conditions of the world. The world, says Mr. Balfour, is an ab-

surdity without creation or guidance; very well, infer creation and guidance. More than this we have no authority to claim. And then, in a moment, we suddenly come upon Mr. Balfour speaking of "a living God!" Who is hypostatising the abstract now? He is straying as far outside his mandate as any Fichte making the Ego rebound on nothing, and bounce back in the form of a material world. God, by the hypothesis, is a causative and a guiding principle, and there is no possible right to attribute one shred more of meaning to the conception than what is supplied by the method of its deduction. Is it needful to discuss the value of this result? Such a God is worthless and unmeaning: the result is as jejune as the process is illegitimate. This, then, is the end of the long quest—a baseless assumption, a fulfilment illicitly begotten by an imagined need on an illusive satisfaction, an identical proposition, an empty formula, a Nothing. Sooner than that, let us go back to our old paths that seem to conduct us now and again a step onward, even though it may be no step nearer the goal. Let us turn again and maze ourselves with our broken ingenious relations, and scrape ourselves with our blind industrious scalpels.

"LITTLE EYOLF."[1]

To sit down on a chair before a desk and criticise Ibsen on paper with a pen, by the light of the ordinary canons of dramatic art, seems almost a sacrilege. There is that individuality about Ibsen that constrains even sane minds to envisage him either an unhoped-for anticipation of the Kingdom of Heaven or a painfully morbid development of the Abomination of Desolation. It is laid on Mr. William Archer's conscience to make him talk a shambling, if sometimes forcible, English that is not like any other of the tongues of men. There is a quaintness in the provincial view of life native to Norway, where they make up in the theory of modern civilisation what is wanting in the practice of it. And there is an essential individuality—God-sent or Devil-born, it does not matter—in the perverse, anarchic, fearless, iconoclastic character of the man himself which struggles to the surface of every play. The flavour of all these you either like or you do not: and accordingly Ibsen is either a compendium of the seven names of the prophet, or a convenient root for words significant of mental and moral debasement. But there is always a neutral zone for criticism in the work of any man that tries to be an artist. It may be, or may not,

[1] New Review, January 1895.

that Ibsen sees what play ought to be written: but does he write a play well when he sees it? Being here outside the jurisdiction of vice and virtue, we need not be afraid to answer that he does. Ibsen knows his business. He can make a play: "Little Eyolf," like the rest, is a work of skilled joinery, made, and made by hand. As mere workmanship, the best pieces of Ibsen's maturity—"The Doll's House," "Rosmersholm," "Hedda Gabler"—are in no way less finished than the articles turned out by the renowned Sardou-machine. As the workmanship of a man who conceives himself to be wrestling with great and wonderful material, the turbulent Norseman stands in some respects nearer the plane of Sophocles than do most men who have constructed plays among the barbarians. In his best work you will hardly find one word thrown away. The casual inanities of the first act loom like omens through the vistas of the last. The irony of the drama is drawn to its tensest. Every speech adds a touch of character, a breath of atmosphere, a nerve to the dramatic emotion. The subject is knit together by a hundred cords; it holds together with the adhesive unity that is the formal standard of artistic triumph. That is Ibsen at his best. But we may doubt if at present, in this technical province at least, Ibsen still stands at his best. Not but in "Little Eyolf" there is firm characterisation, dramatic irony, economy of the irrelevant dependence of part on part. But the work is not so tight as it used to be. Asta Allmers allows herself to

contribute a good many remarks to the conversation that contribute little to the revelation of her own character and nothing to the play. And this is fatal, because Ibsen's dialogue makes no pretence to intrinsic brilliance. The moment it begins to be irrelevant, it collapses all in a heap to the merest flat of inconsequent and even laughable banality.

Yet a few gaps of disconnected commonplace in the midst of much pregnant writing are of slight moment: they merely underline the fact that Ibsen is growing older. Nor is it of importance that this very dramatic pregnancy demands a second reading, or a reading preparatory to a hearing. If you mean to dig deep into the heart of man within the compass of three acts, you must pack the rubble pretty closely. But "Little Eyolf" is marred by a far worse blemish. The dialogue, in the main, is adequate to express what it means to express. But the plot is not thus adequate, or rather there are two plots—or, rather, it is hard to say how many and what plots there are. "Little Eyolf," to continue its analysis on the formal side, is ruined by a fault of construction. It sets out to consider the case of a husband and wife, who indirectly by their own fault, lose their one crippled child. That is quite a fair motive for an art that deals with character. The central characters are weak, but not abnormally weak, and it is the gain of literature that they should be taken in hand by such as Ibsen. He faces the situation with penetrating insight and unflinching logic. But, most unluckily for him, this

will not make a play. The effect of such a catastrophe on the parents is not in itself an adequate motive for dramatic treatment. Such a calamity will work changes. But it will work them slowly; by degrees they will manifest themselves from within, as the legacy of the one tremendous blow, and not as the effects of new causes acting from outside. What has the drama, whose field is the clash of personality on personality, to do with such a psychological morphology? Given these facts alone, the play could assume but one shape. Alfred and Rita would come out on the stage singly or together, at imaginary intervals, let us say, of a fortnight, briefly to diagnose their souls and announce that they were going on as badly as was to be apprehended. Even as a duologue the thing could never be played, unless the apostle of modernity were to go back and borrow a chorus of Æschylus to help fill in his blanks for him.

In the face of this impossibility, what does Ibsen do? He must dovetail a character or two on to Allmers and Rita to help them out with it. Hence Asta Allmers and Borgheim. Borgheim is not of much greater consequence to us than he is to the Allmers family—a very pleasant acquaintance, whom we should miss and learn to do without. He is a firmly-drawn character, and he enriches the world of truth with the aphorism that "labour and trouble one can always get through alone, but it takes two to be glad." But his concern with the play is purely atmospheric. He is just the "open-

air boy" that he wished to see constructed out of little Eyolf. He comes in like a blast of keen mountain wind and flings up into your nostrils the stuffy air of the home of Allmers. His glad straightforward energy is the measure of their wandering helplessness. The truth is that, in Borgheim, Ibsen actually has gone back to the Greek chorus—such chorus as in these days he is allowed to employ. Borgheim is no more than a sublimated kind of stage property, like the doctor in "The Doll's House," and the gentleman who borrows half-crowns and ideals in "Rosmersholm;" his function is purely mechanical; it is a confession of impotence, perhaps; but who is weak man, to write plays by the book of æsthetic? Our own dramatists who season their works with character parts, as per salary list, will doubtless furnish the first stone.

But Asta is on quite a different footing, and is, indeed, a shameless intruder. She is simply thrown into the plot to save it from burning out for lack of fuel. As long as she is her brother's sister she is well enough. If the house of mourning is the post of duty to the very deceased wife's sister, how much more to the deceased son's aunt? In the analysis of Alfred Allmers under shock it arrives by logical process that he turns from the unsympathetic wife to the more sufficient sister. But even that is not enough to make an acting play. And so out comes the family portfolio, and out of the portfolio the late mother's letters, and behold! Asta is not Alfred's

sister at all, but our old friend Regina the other way about, and Rebecca West the other end up, and Elida Goldenlöve the other side round, and one touch of incest makes the whole gallery of them kith. Worked in skilfully no doubt it is, but it is a hackney dramatist's trick, flouting you with its arbitrariness and utter divorcement from the inevitability of real drama. The crisis between Alfred and Asta is wantonly pasted on to back the tottering interest of the real play. And time-worn and impertinent as it is, it is so much stronger for the stage and the dramatic interaction of characters, that for the time it usurps the attention. So that the play ends twice. It ends at the supposititious crisis not half-way through the last act. And then you remember that this was not the play after all. And Alfred and Rita stand up and spin off the rest of the play out of their own entrails with no particular reference to the other characters, or each other, or anything else.

In the technical aspect of his art, therefore, when it is judged by the exacting tests his own technical mastery challenges, Ibsen has for the first time achieved a failure. For the first time he has set out to write a play that could not be written, and attempted to rescue it with a play that in its essentials he has written before. If he had kept rigidly to the death of Eyolf and the contrasting sorrows of his parents, he could have held no theatre in the world for an hour. Mourning for the dead is a narrative, not a dramatic emotion. If he had preferred the

story of Asta and Allmers, he could have written a strong play, but it would have been an inverted reflection of "Ghosts," and an exact double of Goethe's "Geschwister." As it is, he has written a Siamese twin of a play which all his unmatched dexterity cannot restrain from reciprocally pulling itself by its own leg.

But it would be affectation to pretend that it is of any enthralling interest to anybody whether, regarded as a stage-play, "Little Eyolf" is a good stage-play or not. It is for the joy of lustier debates than these that we look to our Ibsen. What of the Problem? And the Lesson? And the Psychology? And the Realism and the Rat-Wife? Especially the Rat-Wife; she is the newest, so that most of the inquiries will naturally be directed to her address. Here is more symbolism, and what are we to say of the supernatural in the drama? And who is the Rat-Wife, anyhow? And what does she stand for? And what was the heart-quaking Mopsëman doing in that bag? But, seriously, need we bother about the Rat-Wife? If you must know, she symbolises Death, and she has no business to. The champions of Passive Acceptance, my Ibsen right or wrong, need not trouble to re-harness the ghost of Hamlet's father. Ibsen himself has set his seal to it that the only ghost admissible to the theatre in these days is the inherited characteristic. In any case, Death the Assuager does not take the fiord steamer down to Christiania, nor would any pure-bred hell-hound condescend to be led round cottages by a string.

The unpitied fate of "The Master Builder" is proof enough that drama to-day must either be natural or else make it quite plain that it means to be imperturbably supernatural. It is enough to say that northern fairy-tales will play such tricks with northern imaginations as they glide into old age. The beldam has strayed out of "Brand" or "Peer Gynt" into society where there is no place for her.

As for the Problem and the Lesson, it is gratifying to be able for once to assure the public that they may be approached without suspicion. There are more lessons come out of Ibsen's plays than ever went into them. The human mind could extract a lesson out of the "Nibelungenlied" if it thought fit; it habitually draws precepts from the "Song of Solomon." It is true that Ibsen lends currency to the superstition by taking for his characters men under the influence of dominant ideas—specialising upon one side of them, as with the optimist and the pessimist in "The Wild Duck." But to deduce therefrom that Ibsen is a pessimist rather than an optimist is much the same as inferring from the superiority of "La Bête Humaine" to "Le Rêve" that M. Zola thinks a locomotive-engine is better than a cathedral. For the Problem, that is, of course, a serious matter. Playgoers—how often must you go to the play to become a playgoer?—are divided into their camps under the banners of the Problem play and the other sort of play. Perhaps the exactest possible definition of the Problem play is a play like "The Second Mrs. Tanqueray." It seems cruel to

stamp upon the laudable efforts of the public and the 'Daily Telegraph' to differentiate between kinds of plays; but it should be explained, with respect, that every play is either a Problem play or not a play at all. The heathen Aristotle himself was able to point out that every play is divided into two parts, the binding and the loosing, the problem and the solution. If there is no problem, there is no situation, no difficulty, no play of character, no drama. Problem is common to "Philoctetes" and "Charley's Aunt;" and if there could be such a thing as a play in virtue, not of problem, but of the fact that it is spoken from a stage into the theatre, then "Money" would be a play—which is absurd. What the man in the pit regards as a problem play is a play that makes him think, which he justly regards as a phenomenon deserving of wonder. But every play makes a man think, if it goes deep enough into nature. Not necessarily at the time, for if it is a good play you must follow it to the end. But afterwards it does: and this means that the playwright sees deeper into character than the audience. He ought to: otherwise what business has he to come out in front of the curtain instead of cheering from the house? Now, Ibsen has succeeded in making more people think, or thereabouts, than most men of our time. In this play he makes you think of the way it hits a man and woman to lose an only child, more or less by their own fault. That is the problem, and

he works it out to his own satisfaction—maybe not to yours.

That brings us on to the psychology of "Little Eyolf." Now the psychological play is just such a bloodless, 'Daily Telegraphic' apparition as the problem play. Psychology being in the popular language understood as the investigation of what goes on in the human mind, plays, being written in words, which are the expression of thoughts, must needs either be psychological or else a kind of things-in-themselves with no significations that may be apprehended of man. The only true distinction is between good psychology and bad, between much psychology—which means much stripping naked of the human heart—and little. In "Little Eyolf" Ibsen's psychology is much and good. There could hardly be anything better than the first act, except the second. The first act states the case. Here is a mother and a father, both weak—the mother in intellect, the father in purpose and feeling. With both it is the weakness, the unequipped incapacity for life, of the unbalanced mind. The mother, as it turns out, is the straighter, the more respectable, and the commoner type. Her small heart chocked up with an appetent love of Alfred Allmers has no room for anything else, and she has an explosive courage which lets her say so. Alfred would have the courage also, but he has not the self-knowledge. In width, not in depth, there is more of him to know; he does not know it. He talks much of his life-work, which is always a

bad sign in a man: he should be ready with it when anybody pays to see, but not too garrulous of it to himself. So the wretched Allmers at one minute feels himself capable of a batch of new life-works besides his book; next moment he can on no terms have another life-work than Eyolf; and the next he is quite cheerfully prepared to bisect it and apportion the other half of it to Rita. Then the crash comes and the remorseless analysis begins. Ibsen digs up the soul by the roots to see how it grows. And if any stronger, truer, profounder picture was ever made of the bereavement of weak natures and incompetent parents—and they have many points of coincidence with the strong and able—the world seems somehow to have lost count of it. The inarticulate anguish, the compelled self-scourgings, the conscious cowardice, the impious, imperious call to fling out on the world all the pettiness at command—it strikes deep down because it comes from deep down. Through this valley of humiliation the parents win to the tardy hour of self-collection, the gathering up of the fragments, and the wandering slow steps out of Paradise into the desolate beyond. There is a kind of transformation of both at the end—though mark that it is in each case agreeable to character—and this can be taken as untrue to life. People don't change their whole being so, you can hear the critic say. They do not. Nothing transmutes a character, but everything changes it. That is what is meant by saying that Ibsen's plays wind up with a note of interroga-

tion. Ibsen winds up with a question because he knows this. Every episode in a life ends so; there is always the change, but experience only shall show how great a change; the full stop comes only with death. Nora banged the door, and doubtless she came back again within the month, only she did not come back the same Nora, and that change of Nora's is the nett result of "The Doll's House." So Allmers will almost certainly go up North to his favourite gushing-grounds again, only not altogether the same Allmers. And Rita will stay down at the villa and live a new life, yet still in great part the same Rita.

This story of Alfred and Rita would have been better told in a novel. But it is a masterpiece none the less, and it is better to have it in a play than not to have it at all.

ZOLA.[1]

A great writer must elect to march along one of two roads. He may be for all time, or he may be for an age. This means that all later generations will read themselves into the first: in the second one will see itself complete. When he sits down to cast about for his subject-matter, he must decide between what is essential and elemental in life and what is accidental and of the moment. Of the two paths, Emile Zola's genius has impelled him unfalteringly along the second. He is of the last half of the nineteenth century; if it can see nothing in him, then there is nothing to be seen. As a document, indeed, it is sure beyond all hesitation that he will survive for ever. So long as men care one tittle to know of the years that followed '70, they will find no more illuminating history of what was vital in them than 'Les Rougon-Macquart.' But it is to us of his own time, if for any one, that Zola makes his appeal as an artist. If he has not called up this modern world plain and coherent before our eyes, it is impossible he can be more than a curious puzzle for our grandchildren. His men and women are our contemporaries, or they are nobody; his interests, his casts of thought and feeling, are ours or nothing. He has crystallised his

[1] National Observer, August 12, 1893.

day and ours, the Second Empire, material civilisation, heredity and evolution and science, showing us ourselves and the world, raw material of ourselves, mirrored in every face of the crystal in turn.

It is not worth while to-day to draw sword for the realistic method of fiction as Balzac stumbled on it and Flaubert exhibited it full-grown to the world. Its manifest and technical masterpiece can be had in Coventry Street for half-a-crown. Conformably with the essence of art it is a symbolism —the exhibition of the vital facts of life in the details of every moment which they govern and infuse with colour and significance. Such a method needs no defence beyond the reminder that the picture depends for its pictorial quality upon the background as upon the figure: that but for the accidents of life out of which it fashions itself, life would not be at all. Zola took up realism frankly where Flaubert left it. As early as the second volume of his twenty, he began to use the host of attendant facts that formed his background as his atmosphere and his most irresistible engine of expression. The exotics of the hothouse in 'La Curée,' the market-stalls in 'Le Ventre de Paris,' are not just heavy fragrance and prismatic colour: out of them there is struck the dominant note of the book. As the series went on, the mass of details accumulated till it became a gigantic mechanical difficulty to discipline them. But each time Zola triumphed as a craftsman. He is the Napoleon of fiction. He marshals his army of insubordinate de-

tails so that each one contributes to the weight of the mass, then flings them upon you crushingly. Each unit tells, but each is kept rigidly proportioned to the rest and to the whole. There are thousands of soldiers, but they never cease to be an army. So he rises to the artistic miracle of 'La Débâcle'—infantry and cavalry and artillery, engineers and commissariat and ambulance; the smell of the powder and the horses; the swish of each footstep as Corporal Macquart and Private Levarseur drag themselves through the miry lanes of Champagne, the hunger shining from their eyes as they tighten their belts at the bivouac, the blood flaming through their veins in the last madness of Sedan. Yet all these things never blind Zola to the one great generalisation, War, seen steadily and whole.

But to collect together a mob of facts is not realism, and he who can see no more than this in 'Les Rougon-Macquart' has almost a right to belong to a vigilance society, and assist at the prosecution of the next Vizetelly. Art must be governed by an idea, and the pleasure that the simple take to be the touchstone of artistic achievement is but the pleasure that must attend on any idea's comprehension. Now the novelists before Zola had taken for their dominant ideas some aspect of human character. Flaubert did so whenever he took any interest in his subject-matter at all. Balzac did so too: if he was led at times by the irresistible allurement of existence as existence to turn aside and watch the mak-

ing of paper or the diligence service between Paris and the provinces, he was yet never his real self but when he was prying curiously into the most complex workings of the heart of man. In one blasphemed word, the ideas before Zola were psychological—the same ideas that, having run under when the naturalistic novel began to conquer the world, have sprung up again with Bourget. But to Zola the warmer and finer emotions of man call faintly. Beyond that most poignant tragedy of Silvère and Miette in his first volume, there is hardly a sign of it but the hard, if terribly convincing, power of 'La Conquête de Plassans,' and the half-loving, half-cold dissection of 'Une Page d'Amour' and 'Le Rêve.' Again and again it has been repeated, with more truth than understanding, that Zola creates no individuals. You might indeed say, on the other side, that literature has never created an individual; that to create a complete individuality you must weave together into your impersonation everything in the world that could be said about a man; that to tell his name and his ancestry, as Zola does, to describe his person, to say how he eats his dinner or reads his newspaper, is really to give the world a greater working intimacy with him than the finest diagnosis of his emotion when he first called his loved one his. None the less it remains true that, compared with masters like Shakespeare or Turgenieff, Zola does not people his books with breathing men. The terrible Rougons and the abominable Macquarts are less than men,

but in a manner they are also more. There are sides of their characters that he leaves unhandled. But where his ideas touch them, where men come into relation with the forces on which the mind of his age has been set—then he tells more of them than any man. He gets firmer foothold on to the solid rock of the ultimate. His generalisations spread themselves out more widely; he sets men more manifestly in their true places among their fellows and in the total of all things.

Man, then, is not his theme, but man in relation to the forces that fashion the world. To vary the phrase, he is the poet of these days of science as Darwin was their prophet—the poet of machinery and levelling analysis and all-governing law. His subject is some enormous idea, and his characters are the subject in action. Marthe Rougon and her imbecile Désirée, Maxime and his miserable Charles, are not men and women, but units of heredity. Eugène Rougon and his arid satellites are units of the Second Empire. There is no novel of all the twenty—if you set aside 'La Fortune des Rougon,' which just stops short of being two books, a preface and an idyll—that has not some huge abstraction for its subject. And, strangely, the one factor in Zola's universe which he fails most signally to embody artistically is just that heredity of which he started out to write the epic. To the poet heredity appears most importunately as unbreakable bands of necessity, hurrying its victim whither it will. But, though no man certainly has better realised

the tragedy of the inexorable constraint that presses in on man from every side, Zola has never worked out the possibilities of heredity. He paints it at his solemnest in the gathering of the five generations in the madhouse of *les Tulettes*, but it is never even commensurate for impressiveness with Ibsen's appalling concentration of heredity on one point in 'Ghosts.' Indeed, heredity lags languidly through some half-dozen volumes and then disappears altogether but for the rarest and most perfunctory moments of self-assertion. With 'L'Assommoir' Zola began to grapple with fresh impossibilities. The heroine of that book is not Gervaise nor drink, but the *vie ouvriere*. There are characters for all the shades and gradations of it. In the thick of all goes Coupeau, haled along by the unpitying impulse of environment, the type and muster of Aristotle's tragedy—the man neither good nor bad, tumbling by accident and error into the deepest pit. Having shaken the load of heredity from his back, Zola went on to other conceptions, which you may colour with the light of science or poetry as you will—prostitution in 'Nana,' a rotten *bourgeoisie* in 'Pot Bouille' (where the essential is the chorus of servants, the scum on the stewing corruption of the demure house in the Rue de Choiseul), the new commerce in 'Au Bonheur des Dames,' the "black poetry of Schopenhauer" in 'La Joie de Vivre.' The conceptions expand, and the style is transformed with them. Beginning in the tight, costive manner of Flaubert, the *mot propre* giving

its value to each sentence, he becomes broader and more fluent, at last quite melodramatic. In the end comes 'Le Docteur Pascal,' the hymn of life: the hymn that whispered through the rustling of the Paradou, half-sung in all the births, marriages, and deaths with which the toiler marked the milestones of his progress, the undertone in all the episodes of love and lust that give away half the virtue of convinced frankness in the vice of unperspectived revolt. The long work ends fitly with the passionate dithyramb of life—the unconquerable resolution to exist that goes like the sun into sewers as into palaces, and is not defiled.

In the process of these widening generalities he gradually shaped a structure for the novel quite distinctive and luminously illustrative of the side the world turns towards him. While he cast the skin of Flaubert's manner of writing, he developed a framework for each story almost as rigidly formal. Taking the material in which he chose to personify his ideas—say a coal-mine and colliers—his manner was to present a long procession of pictures of it. There are the pit and the pitmen at all times, day and night, summer and winter, in every phase of their characteristic life. Sometimes, in 'Une Page d'Amour' or 'Au Bonheur des Dames,' the picture never changes its outlines. Impression succeeds elaborated impression, and the reading public cries out against the unmeaning, unending repetitions. But they are not repetitions. Each one of the great sales in 'Au Bonheur des Dames' marks the close

of a cycle of the history; each cycle enfolds more than the last. Such samenesses, with the greater fulness to which they are the foil, mark the ever-recurrent pulses of life and civilisation, and each throbs with an intenser enthusiasm than the last. Sometimes—take 'Le Docteur Pascal' for an example — the same words ring again and again through the book like a refrain. As the passion of the poet grows hotter they too grow with a magnificent expansion, until they burst the body in which for art's sake they are imprisoned, and pervade the universe in their native guise of universal truths. There is always the consciousness of abstract truth struggling to assert itself through every one of Zola's men and machines and institutions. It gives all his work a strange kind of perfection, not wholly artistic, but more like the perfection of a system whose fitted parts are all squared and jointed flawlessly. If the system is right, all is right. To come back to 'La Débâcle,' what could be more triumphantly relevant and triumphantly true than the figure of the peasant stolidly working his fields among the shells of Sedan? Without the idea it is melodrama —perverse and objectless melodrama. But the idea comes to rescue it—the idea of recuperation in the fact of destruction, the indomitable perpetuity of life, the implicit statement of the law that becomes outspoken with 'Le Docteur Pascal.' It is this symmetry and coherence—the constant sense of massive agencies working through all casual actions to which they lend purport and explanation—that

gives us leave to call Zola the most ideal of the idealists. The real subject of the 'Rougon-Macquart' is eternal truth, its real hero indestructible force.

It is the scientific spirit aflame with poetry. In place of the hopeless struggle to grapple with the monstrous tangle of interests that make up a man to-day, Zola puts the device of taking him by sections at a time and referring him under each section to one of the primitive forces that struggle in the complexity of his nature. He seems to be singing the war-song, not of man but of the impalpable agencies of philosophy. But to tell of philosophies and agencies is none the less to tell of man, whom they form. It is the passion of science, who for once has caught the look of her sister art. That is why Zola is for this one age of science—a wonderful sport in the line of artistic evolution. For if art could only once be science she would die happy. But she would die all the same.

THE NEW TENNYSON.[1]

("In Memoriam." By Alfred Tennyson. London: Moxon.)

That a poet, when death has robbed him of his friend, should put his woe into threnody is in gracious accord with what the world takes to be the spirit of poetry. Poetry, we please ourselves to think, is the resultant of emotions too importunate not to chafe at the commonness of the common expression and burst through them into a form where words can pulse with the rhythmical throb of grief and joy. By the grave, if anywhere, poetry claims the right. Then, if ever, our ears are open to the poet. But what are we to say if he catches at the occasion of his bereavement to spin cobwebs of disquisition about himself and nothing else? Are we not right to complain that he abuses the privileges of his order? Surely. And we take "In Memoriam" to be such an abuse. In three years its author has written one hundred and thirty and odd poems about himself. He has, like other men, a right to talk about himself, to strip his soul naked in the eyes of mankind. But he has not a right to do so under the pretence of an elegy, and the pen-

1 *The state of the publishing trade is such that, for this week at least, we can give reviews of old books alone; done, it is right to say, in several styles, as though the themes were actual and the authors were of to-day.* —Ed., 'National Observer,' August 26, 1893.

alty for his transgression is that his elegy rings hollow. We look first in such work for the energy of sorrow; instead of it we find this poet on the threshold obscurely quoting some classic, we know not whom, and wondering to himself how long his sorrow will endure and what will be its nett effect on his character. "I weep for Adonais," said Shelley in a like case. But our threnodist, having struck this false note at the outset, continues to blunder, and the chords of his lyre jar worse and worse as he goes on thrumming it. At the best of times Mr. Tennyson has but little fire of emotion to warm withal the delicate flavour of those things, old and new, that he serves up before us: he is the poet of afternoon tea drunk in blue teacups in an old garden. And here where we crave most urgently for a little genuine glow we get it least. We ask for sorrow; he gives us tortuous self-analysis and metaphysics. "In Memoriam" is, indeed, the triumph of self-consciousness. When before did genuine mourning drape itself in the stiff trappings of Horace, or spend hours on the laboured dissection and comparison and classification of the various kinds of distress into which finally he can twist himself at will? It is not so that real men mourn, nor so that they write elegies. Grief for the dead is very like a bodily wound. Now and then it can be handled freely, and the ecstasy breaks out; afterwards it stiffens, and to touch it hurts. The memory of loss is pushed resolutely into the background of the heart; it is for a long time too horrible, too

piercing an agony for recollection: one goes about in a fear almost physical of anything that might rip it open anew. Look at that, and then look at this dandy heartbreak of "In Memoriam," patting its lines into shape and tasting the flavour of its epithets—evermore picking, picking, picking at the scar that never bleeds. How dear Mr. Tennyson's friend was to him we have neither the right nor the desire to inquire: it would be a wanton, an insolent cruelty to try to plumb the depth of his distress. But since he has made it into a dirge, we have the right to say, and we do say, that his dirge is a bad one. It may be great philosophy, it may be wonderful poetry, but it is most frigid elegy. Read Catullus, read Shelley, who was all things sooner than full-blooded, and you will see the difference between straight and crooked, deep and shallow. In all these well-filled lines you shall not find one echo of that instinctive, animal cry of pain which levels all men in the face of those cruellest deaths that lop off a limb of the soul and leave the rest to live and wince.

Mr. Tennyson chooses to make public all things about himself except the one passionate fact that could alone have started the work into life. He goes round and round it, with a hint here and an implication there that just serve to make the mixture tepid instead of cold. He sings, it may be, because he must, but it is the must of the scribbler, and not of the full heart. It is so with the poems that would be personal; it is so with those of wider

application approaching issues momentous for the race. Nothing but an incurable itch of versifying could have kept him through all those years, drying his tears, then blubbering out afresh, moaning out his timid doubts and fears and hopes, now an Atheist, now a Christian, now a Pantheist,—always anything for poetical copy, and at bottom always nothing at all. You long to take him by the shoulders and shake him heartily and quote King Claudius on unmanly grief. Where is the use, where is the dignity, of these perpetual unanswered questions? Is my friend alive? he cries, and answers Yes and No in a breath. Shall I see him again? Is it considered a *mesalliance* in heaven if he loves me yet? Now what is all that to him? In love, as in all things, it is more blessed to give than to receive. The reward of love is in the loving. And just so the reward of life is in the living. Why go straining aching eyes towards the clouds when honest living lies in the path before him? What is there in this life that makes it nothing but the vestibule of the vacant future, to be hurried through with the one regret that it is not more quickly crossed? To vapour about the imperfection of this world and the tremulous hope of another—this is not the faith of which he is so enamoured. Faith is to set one's face steadfastly against all the ills of life; content to know what can be known, and outstare the brazen truth with the unconquerable resolution born of self-respect. Honest doubt can never creep into the philosophy of a brave man who can think

straightforwardly. Only two attitudes befit him: investigation towards what is possible of discovery; indifference to all else. Does his friend die? He faces out the truth: he is gone for this life, and it is hopeless work to guess about another. He reels and goes on, torn with the pain but never surrendering his free soul to it by so much as one groan.

This puny womanish complaint, that can neither weep hot tears nor keep dry eyes, might be set in the loveliest language of poetry, and that would avail nothing to save it. The curse of the sentiment must pervade the words. And so it is here. That there are exquisite passages of poetry we allow. It is unfortunate that they are there to veil its ugliness, but it is certain that there they are. As certain is it that the exquisiteness is all in the irrelevancies. That Mr. Tennyson can make graceful descriptions of scenery, that he is a master of literary allusion, that he writes music, that he constructs phrases that capture the fancy by an unerring combination of sound and colour and motion,—all this is known to all Englishmen. But here sickly thought has spread its contagion to words. Just as he circles round and round his despair and his belief, so in this poem he often writes round and round his meaning with never an attempt to get to the heart of it. He has invented here a new language, the language of the refined Sentimental Coward. He tumbles alternately into fine writing and obscurity. The vice of circumlocution is inevitable to the man who sets himself to pore over his friend's grave; the vice of

vagueness proceeds as inevitably from thus fumbling with an idea that he cannot or dare not grip. So that there results a strange admixture of final and immortal phrasing with dark and mawkish affectation. And, because the affectation is the true vehicle of the poem, it is this that tastes in the mouth at the end. The metre, too, with its horror of the epigrammatic, is made to bleat in. With it all there are two lines that stick fast in the memory and sum up the whole. The voice is not the voice of grief; and the words are hard to understand. Also, they are not worth understanding.

WORDS FOR MUSIC.[1]

That the books of Wagner's operas are monuments of foolishness, all that are unfamiliar with the Middle High German tongue will readily allow, and those that are not are unworthy of being taken into consideration. Yet it is so much less trouble to give a dog a bad name than to hang him, that our countrymen would often be at a loss to uphold this primary conviction by solid argument. So that the Englishman abroad in the Fatherland of the *Leitmotiv* might well be idler than in going to see and supply himself with a poser for the Wagnerian. There is not so much to do of an evening in Munich. The stranger may spend one evening drinking beer in the English Garden, and the next at the uncovered tables of the Münchener Kind'l drinking beer; but in the end tedium will surely drive him into the Hoftheater. There, by good luck, he may chance upon that earliest work of the master that he called "The Fays." Of the music, indeed, he need take little note. It points back to Wagner's Kapellmeistership at Dresden, when the tradition of Weber still hung about the opera there. But Wagner might have slept all his days in sackcloth and ashes, instead of silken nightshirts, without being granted that delicious magic of melody with

[1] National Observer, July 22, 1893.

which Weber embroidered his tales of fairyland. The score of "The Fays" is all made up of commonplace phrases, repeated meaninglessly to infinity, of endless recitative with never a vitalising touch of drama, and among it all some faltering echoes of Weber coming to a timely end by quick and welcome suffocation. But the book is a dream and a wonder beyond the imagination of man. Seen and heard by the untutored Englishman, this is the impression of it.

You begin with some evolutions of what the playbill calls the Wifely-Ballet-Personal: after which the story unfolds itself. Once on a time a certain prince strayed in an unguarded moment to Fairyland, became naturalised there, married a consort and had two children. But by the beginning of the tale he had grown cold to the embraces of his consort (she is never called wife) and deaf to the prattle of his children. His affections were set passionately on one thing only in all the world, and that was going to sleep. He would go to sleep all about the stage, on no occasion, for whole scenes at a time. One day he happened to be sleeping "around" in a wild and rocky country, when a large crowd of men with alpenstocks swarmed in over the cliffs and began singing a chorus so loudly that the prince awoke. At first he seemed to take them for the pilgrims in "Tannhäuser," but they quickly assured him that they were hunters, that they came from his native land, that his father was dead, and that he must go back and be king. He received

the news with emotion, shook hands somewhat perfunctorily all round, and promised to speak to his consort on the matter. With a view to this, he walked very quickly up and down the stage for several minutes singing "Where art thou? Where art thou?" but finding his efforts unavailing to fetch her, lay down and went to sleep. As he would not go to his consort's palace, his consort's palace, reversing the action of Mahomet's mountain, came to him. The rocks opened and it appeared in all its gorgeousness. The portent did not, of course, awake him, but his consort did, and received the news of his impending departure with indignation. None the less, he went. Whereupon his consort, who was a woman of determination, ordered in a large ornamental swing-boat, got into it with two friends, and was hoisted up into the flies: so that she was presently seen no more.

The curtain next rises on his native city, which is just being assaulted by the enemy. His high-spirited sister is promenading the battlements in a *decolletee* suit of armour. The king arrives, and great joy is felt. But joy is changed to consternation when his consort strides on to the stage from behind a convenient bastion. To mark her sense of his desertion, she suddenly produces the two children from somewhere (they could not possibly have been concealed in the swing-boat), breaks off some yards of battlement, changes all the back scene into a lurid wall of fire, and flings the children over into the flames. To the father, inefficient at

the best of times, this came as a heavy blow: he fell at her feet in speechless horror and submission. So she opened a postern gate in the city wall, and there they were, as lively as ever (which was not much to say), toddling on to the stage again. At this point the excitement of the chorus became so intense that it went out for a minute or two and defeated the enemy. When it returned it found the king still grovelling at his consort's feet. To show him what he had lost in deserting Fairyland, she was still doing wonderful tricks with the scenery. After which she and her two attendant fays disappeared contemptuously down a trap-door, and the king, tired out by such trivialities, went to sleep just where he was. He had not slept a wink for nearly three-quarters of an hour.

He must have slept for some time, since by the beginning of the next act his sister was queen, and had bestowed her hand upon the tallest of the chorus. Suddenly he came round a corner into the palace and saw the royal procession pass by. For a moment he was thunderstruck; but seeing the necessity for cool and wary action, he pulled himself together and went to sleep on the steps of the throne. They were covered with a very cheap linoleum, but anything was good enough for him to sleep on. Suddenly the two attendant fays descended in the very same yellow swing-boat; they woke him up and called his attention to a magic harp and sword and shield beside the throne, which he had not previously observed. He showed no

resentment at being awakened, and the three went out together. The next scene lay in Hell, where a furious rout of the Beasts of the Apocalypse was howling and dancing uncouth steps. To these there entered the king and the fays through the rocky wall. Hardly had he time to ask, "Do you know if my consort is here?" ere they were upon him all. But he behaved with unusual spirit, and drew his sword; the monsters maintained the unequal fight for a few bars, until one of them got pricked with the brand, on which they were dispirited and went away. Then the scene changed to another room in the same, where a squad of recruits was being drilled. The king and fays appeared as usual and asked the usual question; the squad formed a Macedonian phalanx and advanced upon him. He retreated till he could retreat no farther; then it occurred to him once more to draw the sword, on which the squad departed. Thereon he threw away the sword and began to play the harp. The expedient, imprudent as it might seem, was attended with unexpected success; for the rocky walls of Hell opened, and there stood his consort, smiling forgiveness. And behold! he fell at her feet as of custom.

Meanwhile, the walls opened wider and wider, disclosing the King of the Fays, surrounded by the Wifely-Ballet-Personal. He made a long speech, concluding with the blessed assurance that the earthly king might have his consort and be a fay—the one pursuit in life for which he was thoroughly

fitted. Then a strange thing happened. It became plain that the King of the Fays was sitting on the top of a gigantic epergne, and the lower bases suddenly began to rise out of the stage. It went up and up, and on each branch sat one of the Wifely-Ballet-Personal. Last of all came a sort of triptych, with a long, long fay in the middle, and the two children, one on each side. It was an expansive moment. The father embraced them, and almost slept for joy. Everyone else embraced everybody, saving only those on the epergne, who would have fallen off if they had. And the curtain fell on the touching scene and an audience greasy with tender satisfaction.

THE FUTILE DON.[1]

He squares his elbows at high-table to the most marvellous of *entrees;* he rolls his eyes in common-room as he gulps the most precious of ports. And the *entrees* twist him with indigestion; the wine laps him in drowsiness. He crouches over his fender in May and catches cold. He guts Mommsen's 'Staatsrecht' for his lectures, and cannot decipher his notes. He reads Tennyson, and forgets him in the very crisis of quotation. He talks of this and that, but pre-eminently of this. He walks round Godstow or Trumpington, panting and snatching short steps like a girl. He kneels down in chapel, covering his face with his hands to shut out the undergraduates, and prays God to be delivered from all heresy and schism. You would docket him as the pattern of important futility. And all the while he is dead.

Quite dead, and there are hundreds of him buried in Oxford and Cambridge, round chapels. His colleges are castles of somnolence, palisaded off from all the world of men and things. Pass through the heavy gate in front, across the dead silence of the court, along the dark passage, up the dusty, winding stairs, and you have yet two stout doors to batter in before you can win to the carpeted, pictured cell

[1] National Observer, May 20, 1893.

where he has dug his grave. Slumbering there, he forgets the green earth, or he never knew it; he takes count no longer of time or of his own self. He might doze inside that sepulchre for years, and every one beyond the college walls be none the wiser nor the sadder. This he has sometimes been known to do; more often he ambles round and round his world of shades, from chapel to lecture-room, from hall to common-room, and so to bed. Rarely there passes over his coffin a gust from the roaring world that stirs him to a moment of galvanic life. Some bruit of impending dislocation in the British Empire has ere now dragged him out into the light to nod away an hour on the platform of the Guildhall or the Corn Exchange. But, for the most part, he is too thickly incrusted with forms and traditions and antiquities to take note of realities. Like the Glaucus of his own Plato, he is so rankly overgrown with shells and tangle that none on earth can recognise him for the man he was.

For he was once a man, nor different from other men. He was not of necessity the schoolboy whom masters wonder at because he knows more than they, and fags laugh at because they know much more than he. Nor was he always the pale and studious undergraduate, not reading but only sluicing in facts in the vain hope of watering his parched soul. Not but he who would become a Don must sit close and read the summer through, and in these modern times must add some gloss of thought to his reading. But when he is first admitted into

the convent he may still flatter himself that he is a man. That is only the beginning. For in the scale of creation the Don ranks between the man and the parson, and the living part of him must be petrified ere he be worthy to fold his legs under the mahogany of the common room. The process of incrustation begins with the formula which binds him to guard and revere the statutes of his college. For a moment he triumphs; he has entered into the palace of learning, and strains his eyes to take in every detail of its gorgeousness. Then the forms and traditions and antiquities grip him, they spread their arms about him: and he stiffens with self-satisfaction into his stalactitic tomb. Contact with the youth he is to educate is the finish of it. Not a word, not a deed, may issue from him that might cause any of those little ones to offend. Beginning by sacrificing his body to what he holds to be his mind, he cannot but end by sacrificing his mind to what others take for his morals.

Among the inexorable forces that close round him and stifle his vital part, none is more potent than his fellows. The Eternal-Donly acts and reacts. Set a Don, even a Don of long standing, down in London or Paris alone, and he might yet attain again to humanity. It is the conventicle of Dons that fosters the academic death and lays its cold hand on every new-comer. Go into a college in Oxford or Cambridge, and you will see men who have known each other and disliked each other since they were twenty—some since

they were ten. Each knows the other's weaknesses well enough to detest them, but not well enough to despise them. Oxford and Cambridge are ruled by the dread of the Sneer. Every one knows your foibles, and he has known them so long that he only waits a chance to make a by-word of them. So the ambition of the Don is wholly fulfilled when he can sit in his carved oak stall in chapel and thank God he is as other Dons are. They are all cut to a dead level. In Cambridge you are despised if you know anything, in Oxford if you do not know everything. In Oxford you must smile on your bitterest enemy as he insults you; in Cambridge you must turn your back at table on your friend when he begins his most amusing story. To write anything more than a school-book is ruin, for it is to be sent naked to the Sneer omnipotent. For he that finds some other outlet for himself except the mere being a Don is assuredly fair game for the clumsiest. So conversation, emasculated already by the fear of the undergraduate, rises to the sublime inanity of an old-maids' tea-party: one learned man of sixty leaning over the table to another, and saying, "Do you know—it has just occurred to me—there are four past or present Queen's men all sitting together at high-table?"

The Don recognizes the existence of women only when he marries them. This privilege was an innovation, and the genuine Don marks his sense of that degradation of learning by being very rude

to the daughters of his married colleague. Those daughters spend their early years in wondering what song the sirens sung; till at thirty-five they drown their sorrows in the violin. The young Don is much put about when he takes one of these foreign devils down to dinner. One who had blushed and stuttered more even than usual (in common-room he was made a mark of for doing something more than usual) was found behind a curtain, laughing fit to die that he should be set to talk with so strange a monster. But it must be said in his defence that the Don often looks on the man of the world with a very good-humoured tolerance. There is always the charitable possibility that if he had been entombed for thirty years inside a college he might have made a very donly Don after all. But that is no excuse for the Don who tries to be a man of the world: for he is only saved by the fact that he never by any devilishness succeeds.

AT TWENTY-FOUR.[1]

He who stops to take account of his journey through life must needs suppose to himself that he stands on an eminence. He can trace the path by which he has come, and through the tangle ahead fancy will ever thread him a descent not wholly hard or hazardous. With twenty-four, or with seventy, it is as with thirty. Halt anywhere to look back or forwards, and the vistas of recollection will conspire with the haze of forecast, till you will tell yourself past and future lie mapped at your feet. Still, at what point you will, the illusion must be similar. That is inexorable necessity; weakness dwells in halting at all. Unprofitable curiosity for the past is the complement of weak-kneed irresolution for the future. Seventy, or thirty, or twenty-four, the same unwholesomeness marks the state when this timorous circumspection takes hold of a man. I, that am twenty-four, know myself for a coward in this, as certainly as I perceive and would pillory the cowardice of thirty. I know it, and am ashamed. But while my cowardice is the same, my excuse is by far the greater. For I see—wherein I display myself hardy and unashamed on my mountain of clouds—that I am come to the end of the best stretch of my life, and stand at the outset of the

[1] National Observer, January 6, 1894.

very worst. Till to-day I was a mere irresponsible offshoot from human society. From to-day I am a young man officially, so to put it, and in dreary earnest. I am come into rank with the world—in the rear rank, maybe, but with the untiring necessity of marching forward and keeping step. Till now I sauntered pleasantly on the skirts of the army, went back and forward arm-in-arm with my fancy, and snapped my fingers at the solemn phalanx of serious men. From now the world will regard me, too, seriously, and, for a humiliation ten thousand times more abject, I must so regard myself.

From now I must learn and adjust, correct and systematise. Before I was a fool, confessed and chartered; but the folly of the fool has at least a laughing ease with it, where the folly of the wise man is as ridiculous and stiffly unconscious to boot. When I was not on terms with the working world, I could claim from it neither comfort, nor honour, nor respect, nor even so much as acquaintance. But what was that to me? What if one of the serried regiments jostled me, so long as I could jostle any and all of them at will? Were they magnificently unconscious of my being? That was the very thing I coveted from them most of all. Yet, in truth, I coveted nothing of them, and as little of myself. Passion might clash with reason; physical soundness might break itself on will; what was that to me? I was sucked dry, like an orange, by one woman's kiss. I lost the

friend of all my years for a laugh; I flung away the holiest of sanctions for a dram. But what of that? I was no master of my passions, but no slave either: I was their brother, of one heart and mind with them. We blew in companionship where we listed. If I did not appear vulgarly debauched, I was not the less drunk with a dizzy revel of immorality. There stood no law, no obligation, outside or in. But if duty was trampled under foot, there rose up in its place the god of a most high and passionate pride. As the world vanished into the background, I stood out the more, clear cut, triumphing. For myself there was no rule; for my dealings with the world pride dictated the conditions. Nothing unworthy of the absolute worship in which I held myself, nothing untrue, untrustworthy, insincere, disloyal was good enough for such a libertine anarch as I was. That was the one regulator, and it was enough. I was uncurbed, happy, justified of my being. The pedantry of nascent generalisation I had outlived; the pedantry of moral valetudinarianism was yet to come. And so I drank draughts out of the spring of life, and knew not what I did. I spread and strengthened every way without plan, and pursued the true life of man without the labour and the degradation of testing its truth.

But on pride follows Nemesis. As the one moral idea, the overmastering I, waxed and exalted, reflection and calculation grew up like mildew all about it. Since I was I, and so all-important, the cursed

years brought in the slow persuasion that I must be economised. There was a resistless call to make the most of this unique treasure. And so I drifted on to the threshold of analysis and regulation, of system and moderation, and all the ossified prudences of Thirty. And yet it is not the system I contemn, but the systematising. If a man could but run under ground at twenty-four and come up again at fifty! Then he would see his spiritual experience, his hoard of things done and left undone, complete around him. To extend here, to dock there, would be the matter of but one synoptic moment. But the tentative culture of the soul, the faltering experiment, the shocked recoil, the cold calculating pusillanimity of middle age,—there is the abject anticipation for the next years. Already Thirty knocks at my heart and rattles in my chest. And in the wider sphere the pitiless web of relations is wrapping me noiselessly in. I know well in what form it will come. Have I not once already been vanquished? Tense for conquest, I held the white girl limp in my arms but a day or two ago; like a fool I deluded myself into sparing her helplessness. What was that but the first treason, the first step on to the decline? It is no reverence for the laws, so I apologised then to myself; but here there are particular respects. Remember place and time. It is no duty, but a grace. But next time it will be more a duty; soon a duty outright. Taking cowardice yesterday for soft-

heartedness, I shall end at thirty by believing it virtue.

So stand I on the chill brink of young senility, and shiver to the irrevocable plunge.

A FABLE OF JOURNALISTS.[1]

Now as I went I came on a monstrous wood, that grew round the skirts of a high mountain. Out of its terraces of rolling green the peak shot up clear into the sunlight, mottled with pastures and vineyards, and veined with shining streams that twinkled down it. And there beaconed from the very top a light most dazzling in its whiteness; but what it was, and whence it came, I could not see for the brightness of it. Being come nearer, I was aware of a hoarse roar, as if a great crowd of men and women were fighting among themselves for dear life, and all the while cursing and praying, shouting and groaning and shrieking. And presently, coming yet nearer, and the noise getting ever louder and more urgent, so that now and again some voice or another broke away from the mass and floated distinct to the ear, my eyes lit on a great marvel. I saw that the wood was fenced all about with a tall and sturdy hedge, thickset with most poignant thorns of the length of a man's finger. At the entry of the wood, along all the sweep of the bank as far as I could see on either hand, there in very deed was a mad tangle of men and women, all struggling together and surging furiously up against the hedge. Those that were

[1] The National Observer, June 24, 1893.

first would be stabbed by the thorns and shudder back, screaming and whimpering; but they would be cast aside by those behind, or else caught in the eddy of the mob and flung on to the pricks again. There were folk, too, on the far side of the hedge, but not many; and it was plain to see that each man of those without recked of nothing else but to be first within the pale. So they were all rushing forward together, hurling themselves into the mass to part it and to make a way, trampling on such as had fallen until the blood spurted up into their faces. And they clawed at the throats of those before and beside them, to pull them down and pass over their bodies, and leaped madly on to be gored by the spikes, both men and women imploring those within to help them through the hedge. And the air was rent with oaths and entreaties, and screams of rage and anguish, and the most hideous din conceivable. But when it so happened that one burst through, he would stand an instant in the gap and fight the others back: longer he needed not, for the thorn-branches never broke, but bent and then swung back tougher and pricklier than ever.

When I saw these things I stood a space stock-still with the horror of it. Then coming again to myself, and running up to an old man who was sitting by the roadside a little way from the crowd, "What, in God's name," I cried, "are these lunatics doing?" He, mopping the blood from a rent in his neck, answered: "This is the Forest of Scribes, wherein

are the things that the heart of man most desires—drink and gold. And the peak above it is the Mount of Letters, to which the way lies up through the wood. There is, indeed, another road on the other side, but in that part the steep is guarded by a deep and rushing river, and the ferrymen exact a great price. I, too, was hot to win to the Mount, as all these are, and, being poor, I have been striving at the barrier these many years; but I came by a hurt on the spikes." None the less, he sprang up as he spoke and went at the hedge again like one demented. Therewith, myself catching the frenzy, and thinking that there must surely be some rare thing to be had on the Mount since so many were gone mad about it, I sprang after him into the medley. Twice in that sweating hell I went near to be crushed to death, and once I felt the thorns. But, as it fell out, I saw by me a young man who had just made a gap in the quick-set, and behind him, without more ado, I slipped in; for he, as it seemed, was going in, like myself, not for the gold or drink, nor yet to get up to the Mount of Letters, since he could easily have paid the toll on the other side, but only for a fancy he had to see the wood. Therefore he held me the boughs apart for a moment. But the branches whipped to again behind, and I heard one howling piteously on the thorns.

So I came into the Forest of Scribes. And at what I saw there I was yet more astonished than at what passed outside. For the trees grew so clustered together that their branches were all tangled

and knotted and enmeshed, and the heavy leaves choked what sunbeams might try to struggle in. So that thick blackness fell about me like a cloak, and for a while I could see nothing, but stumbled on blindly over the matted roots. It was darker than any night, and there were no paths, nor was there any light to trace them by if there had been. Now that wood is so huge and mazy that, once inside, a man might almost be dead and buried for any chance there is that he can find his way out again. It is full of dingles and gullies, so that it is impossible to go through by following the trend of the ground. And in every corner, though I could not see, I heard men and women, the strangest medley—high and low, rich and poor, young and old, dull and ingenious—none could tell how many, nor what they did, nor whither they were going, nor why. I heard voices of folk running up and down belated, some calling out to know whereabouts was the Mount of Letters, where the sunlight was; and all the time prating of something else—laws and trading and mummery and chiffons and all the silly and outlandish things in the world.

But the wonder of wonders was to perceive how the very men that at the hedge had been so furiously enamoured of the Mount of Letters, when they got in, began to falter. And the cause of it was this. First, the horrid gloom and confusion, no man knowing whether or no his face were set toward the Mount. Second, as my eyes drank in the dark, and were able to peer a little ahead, I saw that the

gold of which the old man had spoken was hidden underground. Every man was bound to dig up his tale of pieces, else he was swiftly conveyed away out of the wood by sideways that there were into a pit where he presently perished. So the scribes were all scooping up the mire with fouled fingers, some reluctant, some greedy. Also, there was the drink that lay all about in pools: I could see from the shimmer of it in the dusk that it was stagnant and noisome. Whoever drank of it forgot little by little all that he had set his heart on before, and was content to lie down and gulp and gulp it till he ceased even to grub for gold, and was borne away in the end to the pit. These three things there were that seduced such as would climb the Peak (for there were some there that cared nothing for it, and only went in for the gold), and in the end it transfigured them out of all knowledge. They grew hideous to look on: their eyes were bleared, so that they would have been dazed and pricked by the Light of the Mount even had they come thither, and they tottered for weakness. One by one the seekers left groping in the dizzy wood and came to rejoice and hug themselves in the filthiness of the gold and the stench of the pools. Some there were that lay down less from love of it than for weariness and mere heartlessness. These made bitter complaint of their ill-luck, since they were still hungry for the Light. One of them, who was no more than a young boy, I heard crying aloud: "Curses on this beastly Forest of Scribes

and the gold and the drink, and curses before all on my own misery and folly that ever thought to gain the Mount thereby;" and therewith he smote himself on the breast two or three times, and fell to drinking again. Though for the most part they cursed not themselves, but only the labyrinth. Some few had attained to the Mount more by happiness than deserving (said they), but I saw none. For the rest, there they were and there they miserably remained, hating the muck and putridity, but never able to get quit of it, feebleness and blindness ever creeping faster on them, knowing not in what part of the wood they were, nor whether they were journeying back or forward, nor yet anything else but that they were undone for ever, and that through their own unwisdom.

But why they so longed to scale the Mount of Letters, and whether or not, wood or no wood, they could ever have come up to it, and what was the bright light I saw atop of it, though I inquired of many, there was no man of them all could tell me.

THE DREYFUS CASE.

I.

SCENES AND ACTORS IN THE TRIAL.[1]

"Your name?" asked the president of the court-martial.

"Alfred Dreyfus."

"Profession?"

"Captain of artillery."

"Age?"

"Thirty-nine years."

With these three common phrases he broke the silence of four and a half years. Nothing could be more formal, and yet here, in the first five minutes of the trial, was summed up the most incredibly romantic history ever recorded. Alfred Dreyfus—five years ago scarcely anybody knew there was such a name as Dreyfus in the world; now the leading comic singer of Paris, who was born with it, has had to change it because it is too embarrassingly famous! Captain of artillery—and generals who have led armies in the presence of the enemy have lost their commands because of him! Thirty-nine years—and here were men who were known before he was born staking their ripe reputations for or against him! The only living ex-chief of the

[1] M'Clure's Magazine, October 1899.

state in which he was a simple unit; five successive heads, and nine generals besides, of the army in which he was an unregarded subordinate; the minister who for years has conducted foreign relations in which he could never have dreamed of figuring,—all were there because he was. Novelists like Prévost and Mirbeau, poets like Maurice Barrès, philosophers like Max Nordau, French journalists like Arthur Meyer and Cornély, foreign journalists whose names are familiar as far away as Helsingfors and San Francisco,—they had all come to see him. There were men like Picquart and Lebrun-Renault, nobodies when last he saw them, now famous by reason of an accidental connection with him. Most dramatic of all, there was a little, close-veiled woman in black—Madame Henry, a woman he had never seen, widow of a man whom he never knew, yet who had risen to celebrity and fallen to an infamous death because of him.

What did he think of such a miracle? To all appearances he did not think of it at all: he was concentrating all the energies of a mind starved for five years on the answers he would presently make to the charges against him. Perhaps that was as well for him. For had he thought a moment, he would have seen that he, the most famous man in the world, was at the same time the most insignificant person in the court. He supposed they were there to try him; they were not. To him it was everything whether he left his prison a free man or a doubly damned convict for the Devil's Island;

it was nothing to them. He was simply something for them to fight over—a Homeric carcass round which had rallied heroes and demi-gods to hack and stab at each other. On one side were the army, the church, the aristocracy; on the other the civil law, the anti-military proletariat, Protestantism, and the Jews. The prize of the struggle was not Alfred Dreyfus, Captain of artillery, but France.

To the English eye it all looked like what it was—a public meeting rather than a court of law. An English court is almost ostentatiously grim and business-like. The room is small and none too light; the walls bare, unless a plan should be hung on them to illustrate an argument. The judge sits on the bench—a nose, mouth, and chin appearing out of his white wig—like a silent sphinx. Lawyers drone and mumble. Witnesses stumble over monosyllables. The impression is one of hush and dimness—man suppressed, but the awful majesty of the law brooding over all. But this court-martial in the Hall of the Lycée was utterly different. The room was large enough for a lecture or orchestral concert, which is exactly what it is used for. With two rows of large windows at each side—square in the lower tier, circular in the upper—it was almost as light as the day outside. The walls were coloured a cheerful buff; round the cornice were emblazoned the names of Chateaubriand, Lamennais, Renan, and the intellectuals of Brittany. At the top of the room was a stage; hanging on its back wall the white Christ on a black cross pro-

claimed the place a court of justice—only instead of the solemn sphinx in black, there sat at a table seven officers in full uniform. In the centre was the president, Colonel Jouaust, a little old gentleman with dark hair, eye-glasses, and a huge white moustache that seemed part of the same stuff as the tall white aigrette in his *kepi* on the table before him. On each side sat three officers—four small and two heavy men, in the black, red-faced uniform of the artillery; their *kepis* also—tricolor for the senior officers, red for the junior—edged the judicial table with a line of colour. Behind, there sat some other officers, the supplementary judges. On a small tribune to the left of the stage sat three more, the prosecuting commissary of the government and two officers of the court. Opposite, on our right, was a similar tribune, but a new costume—four men in black gowns with one flap and one streamer edged with white fur, white muslin bands round the neck, and a high black cap like a priest's biretta. These were Dreyfus's two counsel and their assistants. Below them on a chair sat Dreyfus himself, an officer of gendarmes at short arm's length behind him. Right in front of the president was a chair for the witnesses. These and the reporters thronged the forward part of the hall—generals with crimson, gold-brimmed *kepis,* and with ribbons and stars on their breasts; civilians in black and brown and grey, tall hats, stiff hats, soft felt hats elaborately arranged into the shape of a haycock, *pince-nez* with broad black ribbons, drooping

green silk neckcloths with fringes—in a word, French dress. In the middle of it shone the silks and feathers of the reporters of the 'Fronde,' the woman's paper of Paris, which does not employ a single man. Sprinkled everywhere were the blue and white uniforms of gendarmes with sword and revolver; along the back of the hall twinkled the red and blue and steel of an infantry force with fixed bayonets. You might have taken it for a political meeting, or an assault at arms, or a fancy ball—or anything except a trial.

The witnesses assisted the impression. Each was brought in by a door beside the stage, came before the president, and raised his hand to the crucifix as he swore to tell the truth, all the truth. The president asks him what he knows of the affair. And then—and then he embarks in a pretentious speech, written out in whole or part beforehand. Sometimes it is interspersed with original documents, which are handed up to be read by the registrar of the court. For the manner of the speeches, the politicians stand upright, declaiming, waving their hands at the president, as if they were asking the suffrages of their fellow-citizens: the soldiers usually sit and murmur confidences into the Colonel's ear. But for the matter, it is always the same—the speaker's self. Dreyfus's case is mentioned, no doubt, but merely as a thread to hang together the witness's first impressions of the case; what he did to correct or confirm them; what view he takes of the importance of this document or the interpreta-

tion of that; what view he took of the international situation in 1894, and what measures then suggested themselves to his mind; what he said to General A., and what Major B. told him that Captain C. had said to Lieutenant D. "This is at fourth hand, it is true," he will ingenuously add; "still it should be allowed its relative value." Hours are spent in repeating at second and third hand the evidence of witnesses who in a day or two are to be heard themselves. It seems no part of the president's business to guide the inquiry: if he wishes for information on any point, he must wait half a day, till the witness has exhausted the subject of his past life and opinions. Cross-examination fails to drag the case out of the rut, for the moment the lawyer asks a question—prefixing, of course, a brief speech of his own—the witness is off again, to the same tune, like a re-wound musical box. While he is speaking, the cross-examiner is composing his next oration; during that, the witness is composing his; and so on for days.

Here is an example of French methods of taking evidence. The officer who was with Dreyfus on the day of his degradation, Captain Lebrun-Renault, has asserted that the condemned man made a confession. A confession, of course, is evidence everywhere. But everybody knows that false confessions of crime are not rare; therefore, in English law, even a confession requires confirmation. In this case the confession is disputed. Captain Lebrun-Renault wrote in his diary that Dreyfus said,

"The Minister knows well that, if I gave up documents, they were worthless, and that it was to get more important ones for them." On another occasion he said "had given up," instead of "gave up." Dreyfus, interrogated on the Devil's Island by the President of the Court of Appeal of Cayenne, said that he said, "The Minister knows well that I am innocent. He sent du Paty de Clam to ask me if I had not given up some important documents to get others in exchange for them." It is not pretended that anybody else heard what Dreyfus said. Yet almost every witness has discussed this alleged confession. First, the president questioned Dreyfus himself on it. Dreyfus denied it. Next, M. Casimir-Perier deposed that Captain Lebrun-Renault had said nothing about the matter to him. Next, General Mercier deposed that he told Captain Lebrun-Renault to tell M. Casimir-Perier about it. Next, these two witnesses were heard in "confrontation," as they call it—that is, standing up side by side and contradicting each other's statements. The ex-Minister of War said that General Gonse heard him tell the Captain to tell the President; the ex-President said that M. Dupuy had told him that Captain Lebrun-Renault did not tell him (Dupuy) that he told him (Casimir-Perier). M. Cavaignac went into the same incident at great length. He said that General Gonse wrote to him that Captain Lebrun-Renault told him (Gonse) that he (Lebrun-Renault) heard Dreyfus confess. This jungle of pronouns is what the French seem to call evidence. And

when you have struggled through it, you hear that Captain Lebrun-Renault is to be called himself to give his own evidence in Dreyfus's presence and to be cross-examined upon it. What a trial!

It is incredible, but it is absolutely true, that the first four days of the public trial yielded not one rag of first-hand evidence, either for Dreyfus or against him. In that time eleven witnesses testified,—one ex-President, four ex-Ministers of War, three other ex-ministers, a diplomatist, a miscellaneous general, and the widow of Henry, the forger,—and all testified simply about themselves. What they said we will leave to French history to tell; this is an article on the Dreyfus case.

Upon the foreign mind, accustomed, if not professionally to weigh evidence, at least to procedure where evidence consists of statements of fact, the gloom fell deeper and deeper hour by hour and day by day. We came with curiosity aflame; we were not merely to see a great show, but to solve a great mystery. Day passed day, general came after general and discoursed for hours; the mystery only grew denser. The first witnesses of any moment—for M. Casimir-Perier came to Rennes not to say what he knew of the case, but to complain that he, then President, knew nothing—were a procession of French war ministers. Only two of them had anything to say, General Mercier and M. Cavaignac. Nothing could be more utterly different than the manner and methods of the two; yet both created an identical effect—mystification. M. Cav-

aignac was all open and above-board. He is the good boy of French politics—a toy Brutus who has lived on his reputation for integrity ever since at school he refused to take his prize from the son of the Emperor who imprisoned his father. This profession of honest man leads to high eminence in France—the more so in that Cavaignac has a monopoly of it. He is the housemaid who sweeps up all the scandals of France. When every public man but half a dozen had dirtied his fingers in Panama, Cavaignac was the man to restore public confidence in public honesty. When Billot had succeeded Mercier, and the Dreyfus case had become worse tangled than ever, and the General Staff and the War Office were suspect, who but Cavaignac could go to the Ministry of War and vouch for them? To the outsider he is a tiresome prig, with his eternal protestations of Roman virtue; and he looks it, with his narrow, stooping chest, his narrow pedant's head, his little moustache, and the close-cropped, smug side-whiskers on his cheek bones. But to France it is an obvious godsend to have one public man who can be relied upon to tell the truth. Cavaignac duly went to the Ministry of War and announced that Dreyfus was guilty. Cavaignac said so; France was reassured at once. Presently Cavaignac got up in the Chamber and read a letter from one foreign military *attache* to another, proving that Dreyfus was a traitor. France had it posted up on the walls of every commune in the country. And then one day it was known

that the letter was a forgery, and that its author, the chief stand-by of the General Staff in its fight against Dreyfus, was in prison with his throat cut. And the mystery was that Cavaignac still said Dreyfus was guilty. The discovery of Henry's forgery, whereof he himself extorted confession and instantly acknowledged it, was the strongest confirmation of his famous integrity. But this time France doubted. His heart remained unimpeachable—only what about his head?

Now came Cavaignac into court at Rennes to set all doubt to rest. He stood up before the council of war, stretched forth his hand, and harangued it as if it had been the Chamber of Deputies. Frankly and clearly he told them everything he knew—and it proved that he knew nothing. Not one single revelation to satisfy the world of Dreyfus's guilt—only an argument such as any man who knew a little of the French army could have made quite as well! It was a good argument, clear, cogent, everything except convincing; and to the impartial mind it disposed for ever of the superstition that a man cannot honestly believe Dreyfus guilty. Cavaignac proved that Dreyfus was in an exceptionally good position to know all the secrets detailed in the intercepted letter which forms the basis of the charge. Very few officers in the French army are able to betray the information that was betrayed; none was more able than Dreyfus. To be evidence to hang a man and worse, this demonstration, to Anglo-Saxon ideas, should have gone further and

shown that none other was able to betray these secrets at all. It establishes Cavaignac's good faith, and makes it easy to believe in other men's: it explains maybe why Dreyfus was accused and condemned. But it does not clear the mists from the most extraordinary affair that ever perplexed the world.

Mercier's evidence explained nothing; but Mercier's personality suggested whole volumes. He said no more than Cavaignac, and said it a great deal less clearly; but the very obscurity hinted at possibilities immeasurable. It was characteristic of the man that his deposition dealt largely with the cryptic methods of the bureau of espionage, and it was itself so cryptic that we knew no more of them after he had discoursed for an hour than when he began. Mercier's personality strikes the note of the whole case. Looking at his back as he gave evidence—tall, straight, and slim—you would have called him soldierly and suspected him stupid. But his face and head are a nightmare of the Inquisition. On his face the brownish skin hangs loosely. There is neither depth of cranium nor height of forehead to hold a brain in. The eyes are slits with heavy curtains of lids, and bags beneath them that turn the drooping cheeks into caverns. A little moustache and beard frame thin lips that might be evil, sensual, humorous, but could never be human. If you look at his head, you call him a vulture; at his face, you call him a mummy. He speaks in a slow, passionless monotone; his gestures seem

calculated to follow his words, instead of proceeding, as a Frenchman should, along with them, on the same impulse. When he stood up side by side with Casimir-Perier, he persisted in his assertions with the dogged mumble of a schoolboy detected in a lie. When he sat and strove to wind the toils of treason round the prisoner, he seemed as unmoved by hate as by pity; he accused him dully, as if repeating a lesson. Cold, deliberate, tortuous, thorough, yet ineffective; verbose, but not candid; bravely barking with native stupidity; conscientiously believing himself to be doing God's work; untouched by hate or love, anger or fear or hope, for others or for himself—General Mercier was the very type and mirror of a Jesuit grand inquisitor.

Mercier was the spirit of darkness; but there was also a spirit of light. Nearest to the audience of the four robed figures on the counsel's bench was a young man of great stature and size. As he sat loosely on his chair, hitched his gown up on to his shoulders, leaned forward to listen or heaved himself back to loll, every motion had a vast sweep, embodied easy power. When he stood, he was a clear head above most Frenchmen in court. His keen eye looked out from under bushy brows as a gun looks out of its port. A light-brown beard, neither very trim nor shapeless, and light-brown hair just beginning to nod over his brow, tempered brute strength with a look of bluff kindliness. If Mercier was an inquisitor, this sunny-faced giant was a viking. It was Labori, the great cross-ex-

aminer. Since he defended Zola he has given himself heart and soul to the cause of Dreyfus. Perhaps his skill in eliciting reluctant truths was piqued at the persistence of a mystery unfathomed; certainly his fighting spirit was roused by contumely to resolute hostility. When first he rose to cross-examine, his voice was agreeable, yet seemed too soft and liquid for the man. But the moment he approached a point, a distinction, an admission, it hardened and rang like steel. In anger you knew he could roar out of that great chest like a bull. If any champion could plunge into the black shades, choke lies and errors and ignorance, and pluck out the truth, it was surely Labori.

Therefore, this being the most tangled riddle of the century, a French journalist galloped into court at half-past six on the third morning with the screech, "Labori is shot!" And Labori was lying on the canal bank with his head in his wife's lap and a bullet in his back. He had been shot from behind; letters, including a threatening missive received the day before, had been taken from his pocket; it was said that a man had tried to wrest from him the portfolio that held his notes for the imminent cross-examination of Mercier. Certain it was that the assailant got away and remained uncaught for days; which, as he must want food and the whole countryside knew of him, spelt sympathy and friends. Plot or no plot, Rennes went mad. Jews wept. Newspaper-sellers volleyed "Long live the army!" or "Down with the tonsure!" and hun-

dreds came out into the street to watch them do it. At every street corner somebody was calling somebody on the other side an assassin. When we returned from court that morning, Jewish ladies were waiting at the doors of the hotel to make sure that no one had assassinated their husbands. They told each other with shaking lips that the lower quarters, inflamed by cider far weaker than St. Louis beer, were contemplating a massacre of Jews. They remembered, and went pale, that it was less than a week to the St. Bartholomew. An eminent novelist went up to an eminent anti-Semite and remarked, "Assassin! Your face displeases me. Assassin! I give you five minutes to leave this hotel. Assassin!" The anti-Semite, who happens to be a Jew, went to the prefect and asked for protection.

"Perfectly," replied the high-minded official, "it is my duty to protect every law-abiding citizen, irrespective of party, race, sex, or creed. I shall do my duty." The anti-Semite Jew breathed more easily. "But," added M. le Prefect, "it would be wrong to disguise from you that my authority stops at the door of your hotel. By the way," he went on pleasantly, "when do you count to leave Rennes?"

"To-morrow."

"Well, then, let me advise you, as a man of well-known law-abiding tendencies, and considering the emotion aroused by the odious attempted assassination of this morning, to—to—advance the time of your departure by a day." And he did. The novelist, a much bigger man, accompanied him to the

door, shouting "Assassin!" and Rennes saw that defender of the honour of the army no more.

The only Frenchman who remained indubitably sane was Labori himself. But bravely as he bore it, the loss of the five hours he had promised himself with General Mercier, and of the distinction he had hoped to win in the greatest case of the century, must have been a bitter disappointment. And to the seeker after truth the loss was almost as irreparable. Without Labori the case was dull, and grew daily duller. The day of the shooting brought a procession of generals—ruddy, tubby generals of comic opera; clean-limbed, elastic-bodied, clear-eyed generals of the manœuvre field; bald, white-headed generals like elders in somebody else's crimson trousers; Jesuitical generals, winding coil on coil of cold insinuation around the pale, silent prisoner. Day after day, day after day, and Dreyfus was helpless and the accusers uncontradicted. It was not evidence, it was not first-hand, it was not new. But the judges, with this perpetual stream of accusation washing over them, for the most part from their own superior officers, must needs be carried away by it in the end. They were plainly earnest, conscientious, impartial; took notes, asked questions, listened with fixity; were worthy of the momentous part fate had assigned to them in their country's history. But from day to day accusation and innuendo trickled over, and Dreyfus's face went whiter and whiter and his chances blacker and blacker.

To the unprejudiced truth-seeker these days

brought a feeling of absolute, dazed bewilderment. The hope of certainty receded further and further into the shades; and with the absence of any palpable facts, the sense of mystery grew till it became an oppression. There must surely be something behind all this. Here was the great case which for five years had convulsed France and perplexed the world. In its ultimate effects it will probably alter the face of Europe. Some have called it the beginning of the end of civilisation. And then there seemed to be nothing at all behind it. Everybody had promised the whole truth for this final clearing of the matter, and yet nothing came. Nothing known—and still it was impossible to believe that there was nothing to know. Everything seemed possible; every wild hypothesis progressed, in turn, from possibility to probability. One hour there had been a great plot and a ring of traitors in the army. Dreyfus was in it, and had been sacrificed to save the others. The next, ambitious Dreyfus had really, as he was said to have acknowledged, given up trumpery documents in the hope, Jew-like, of making a personal success by bringing to the Intelligence Department some great secret of Germany. Presently Esterhazy was telling the truth: he had written the letter to Schwartzkoppen which never went, so as to implicate Dreyfus, innocent or guilty. Anon Dreyfus had been shunned and tabooed by his brother officers, and had rushed to his revenge in treason.

Hour by hour, accusation on accusation, Dreyfus

whiter and whiter, his chances blacker and blacker! And then one morning, when the military clericalists seemed to have their hands on the prize, came a man who restored the balance of the fight. Colonel Picquart slouched into court in a shocking bad morning coat and ill-fitting trousers, lifted his hand to the Christ and swore to tell the truth, sat down in the witnesses' chair, got up, and sat down more comfortably, settled his shoulders to the back of it, crossed his legs, poured himself a glass of water, took hold of the table before him with both hands, and began.

Until he ran his head upon the Dreyfus case, three years ago, Picquart was almost the most promising soldier in France. Like most of France's best men, he is an Alsatian. He had been fighting in Algeria and Tongking, and had spent most of the rest of his service on the General Staff. On these two roads to distinction he had gone so far that he was major at thirty-two and lieutenant-colonel at forty. He speaks and writes English, German, Russian, Spanish, and Italian,—an accomplishment almost unearthly in a Frenchman. He enjoyed the highest esteem of his chiefs. There was nothing in the French army to which he could not legitimately aspire, till he ruined himself by taking up the cause of Dreyfus. He has spent ten out of the last thirteen months in a secret prison. His enemies have never suggested that he had any other motive than a predilection for justice and truth.

He sat down deliberately as one who means to

stay, and began. From the first word his voice was audible to everybody in court. His calm, reasonable-looking face was not stirred by any kind of emotion. He articulated with clearness, spoke with emphasis, with pauses for his audience to digest him, with pauses to prepare them for an important point, with utter lucidity and fastidious exactness of phrase. It was easy to see that he had been a professor at the French West Point. Frankly, he was there to tell them what they did not know, and he no more expected it to be questioned than the schoolmaster expects the child to dispute the multiplication table. The judges hated it. Even if he had not gone against the army, he was younger than any of them, yet senior in rank to six out of the seven. He was a staff man, what they call in the English army a "brass hat," and therefore not beloved by less lucky regimental officers. You could see their hostility: they looked at each other —looked away—leaned back—yawned. Picquart went on in his absolutely clear voice, with his absolutely clear exposition of facts. This was not evidence either; it was a speech for the defence this time, but a masterly one. It was obvious in five minutes that he knew the whole case from A to Z. He knew the work of the General Staff as he knew the alphabet. He knew where every document was kept, where everybody worked, what his work was, what he was in a position to know and what he was not. He saw the nature and bearing of every fact by the dry white light of pure reason.

This was a man in some sort like Mercier—a man for whom hate or love, anger or hope or fear, could never colour what seemed true and right—only this was a man with a brain. His brain was like a swift, well-oiled machine, every wheel running easily in its place, every nut and bolt doing its due share of work, no less and no more. The judges ceased to look about, they looked at Picquart; in the last hour of the five and a half hours' sitting they leaned forward motionless. In two hours Picquart had swept away over three days of the other side, and the case was back on the level again.

And what of Dreyfus all this while? If the chances of the fight excite the man who merely wishes to know, what of him to whom, little as the fighters may care about him, it spells a new life or the old hell? To look at Dreyfus as he usually is, you would say he was the only quite disinterested spectator in the court. To hear him speak, as he rarely does, you would say he was the only man in the case who had the clear head to appreciate the evidence at its just value. Whatever he is or has been, Dreyfus is no common man.

The first day, he came into court like a dead man just beginning to come to life. He walked like an automaton. His hair was grey; his face was like clay; his eyes were invisible behind his glasses. His voice, when he spoke, was withered and sapless. He was a translation into awful fact of the metaphor "living death." But during his interrogation that very day his voice came back—harsh, abrupt, gusty,

but sonorous and vibrating. His denials followed charges with the instant rebound of a sharp volley at tennis. He was stiff, certainly, and formal—it was well said that he looked more like a German officer than a French—and he denied everything with emphasis, but without emotion. The French, of course, found him unsympathetic, and certainly he looked stubborn and none too cordial or genial.

When we saw him again, after four days' secret session, he had thawed amazingly; he was almost back to normal life. He moved with signs of elasticity, leaped to his feet, and spoke promptly, in a full voice. When it was his cue to be still, he sat with his knees together like an Egyptian statue. But when the long series of accusations came lapping over him, intangible, impossible to deny, much less disprove, with Labori gone and his other counsel ponderous, then we saw Dreyfus slowly freeze back to death again. That head that always thrusts itself into the middle of every photograph and insists on striking the note of every glance of the man—the deep, rounded, close-cropped cranium and the harsh, strong, hatchet profile, looked like a death's-head. It had a queer, archaic, oriental suggestion; it might have been a skull from Chaldæa, endowed by wizardry with a moment's life and slowly fading back into grinning bones again. At all times, indignant or patient, hopeful or stony, it is the face of a strong man, both powerful to think and brave to suffer; but it is a face that you can never describe. It is sheer suffer-

ing as it can hardly have ever been seen—suffering both objective and subjective, agony felt and agony borne. There is only one such face, because there is only one France, and France has but one Devil's Island.

As the days wore on, especially when the trial passed into a stratum of smaller witnesses, who made definite statements instead of harangues for prosecution and defence, there gradually appeared a new Dreyfus. He became a man. When he stood, he stood poker-backed as ever; but he walked every day into court as if he were going to his office. His voice was still harsh, but it was measured. Instead of protesting, protesting, half like a wounded beast and half like a machine, he began to argue—to give reasons why he did this or could not have done that. From a man trying to fight his way back to life he had become a man balancing probabilities. His demeanour, his voice, his thought, while always dignified, were daily more even, better oiled, so to speak; more on the level of the rest of us, who have never died and come to life again.

But the real Dreyfus—the unique Dreyfus of the Devil's Island—the petrified soul in the rigid body—that is the wonderful, awful thing that none who saw and heard will ever forget and none will ever see and hear again. For such, Dreyfus will ring through their heads till they die in one cry. It was at the end of the second public audience. General Mercier, cold, hard, passionless, had been accusing him of treason for three hours—accusing him as

though the accused were either not there or, seeing he was there, were a clod of clay. At length he turned, and looked Dreyfus in the face. He said in that measured, pitiless monotone, "If—I—had—the —least—doubt—that —Dreyfus—was—guilty—I—should—be—the—first—to—say" (oh, why in mercy could he not hurry and get it done?) "I—was —honestly—mistaken——"

Ah! A yell that seemed to rip the sleepy hall in twain! Dreyfus was up, eyes blazing, head thrust fiercely forward, fist flung out. "You should say that," were the words; but they tore out so furiously that they were less like words than an inarticulate scream of supreme agony. For a moment he stood thus, eyes and head and fist, with the officer's pitying hand on his arm. It was a tiger checked in his spring—only a human tiger, which is as capable of rage and so much more capable of suffering. And the tone! It is useless to wrestle with description: it was the whole story of the man of the Devil's Island. Everybody in the hall sat stupid and confounded, as though a bolt had fallen from heaven. Everybody felt shy and ashamed in presence of something so incomparably more intense than they had ever known. It was rage, and it was hope—just a tiny dash of hope to embitter the flavour of utter despair. It was passion that a man who always lived among men could never feel, and that passion was trying to burst out all in a phrase and did not know the way. The torment of a dead soul, knowing itself dead, in one anguished

strain to break through into life again—all that was in four words of Dreyfus. It told his whole history: there is no other man on earth that could have uttered it.

II.

THE EFFECT ON FRANCE.[1]

Out-of-doors, under the baking sun of August, lie the somnolent streets of Rennes. The tall yellow-plastered houses, all with their yellow-painted blinds hermetically shut, are faultlessly clean. You could eat off the square cobbles of the streets. But Rennes is clean because it is asleep, and never wakes enough to smirch itself with the avocations of modern life. You look down the long vista of a speckless street, and it is empty. Perhaps one, two, at most half-a-dozen, heavy-booted Breton men or women clack over the ringing pavements. The bile-green river through the town might be Lethe. The shops doze; the market square snores: you wonder how the place exists.

The mind could imagine no completer contrast. Within, the court is all passion; without, the town is all lethargy. Inside the Lycée is being played the last act of the drama that has convulsed France and staggered the world. Outside it, touching it, France is utterly unaware of it.

Eight hours after the court has adjourned for the day, the good people of Rennes, appearing at their doors in shirt sleeves, can with difficulty be per-

[1] Harper's Magazine, October 1899.

suaded that the report of the sitting is already in the evening paper. At length persuaded, they deliberate thoroughly over ways and means before they decide to buy. At last decided, they read with effort, wonder who are Mercier and Picquart that they talk so much about, and come to no conclusion.

On the walls moulder posters—appeals to friends of liberty, to law-abiding Catholics, to haters of Jews; but Rennes passes them without lifting the eyes. Meetings are held to denounce Galliffet, to denounce the army, to denounce the Church, the Jews—anything; a score of young hooligans smoke dirty tobacco, yell when it seems expected of them, go out and do nothing. The more electric Dreyfus, the less conductive is Rennes. The most explosive trial of the century is packed in impenetrable sandbags of apathy. All of which things, you would naturally suppose, make a parable. It is of a piece with the irony of the whole affair that the return of Dreyfus to France, which ought to have been a match to set faction detonating, seemed instead the signal for a sudden, immense, and mostly holy calm.

It is easy to draw inferences from that. It goes to show that the whole affair, the whole importance and notoriety of Dreyfus, was accidental and artificial. As soon as he left the Devil's Island he almost ceased to agitate France. Indeed, when, in 1895, M. Dupuy and General Mercier took the trouble to pass a special law to relegate Dreyfus to the Devil's Island, they did the worst day's work

of their lives. Had he been sent in the natural course to New Caledonia, it is possible that he might be there still, forgotten. "Possible," I say, because he is a Jew, and Jews do not readily forget or cast off their own people; had he been a Gentile, he had almost certainly been forgotten in New Caledonia. But the chance of combining ferocity with theatrical display was too much for a French ministry.

The public degradation of Dreyfus, with its blended accompaniments of imposing ceremonial and heartrending torture, was, after all, not too severe for the crime of which all Frenchmen then honestly believed him guilty. But the added cruelty of making a special law for him, sending him to a special place of banishment, tormenting him with every special penalty or deprivation that could make life a hell—that recoiled on its authors. The stage-management was too good, the situation was too dramatic, to be forgotten. Dreyfus on his own island—the very name of the Devil's Island was a melodarma in itself—sitting in the sun within his palisade, in irons, asking his guards for news, and met always with dead silence, informed—as we now know—that his wife had borne a child two years after he last saw her; who could ever get the picture of such a purgatory out of his head? Under the last blow a Frenchman would have killed himself; but the Alsatian Jew was made of stiffer fibre. He lived on, and his countrymen, with the spectacle of that awful agony ever before their eyes, first

exulted, then came to doubt, insisted, disputed, reviled, lied, forged, fought, forgot friendship, kinship, party, religion, country—everything except the silent man in irons under the sun of the Devil's Island.

But when he was brought back—when he was once more Alfred Dreyfus, Captain of artillery, in the cell of the military prison at Rennes, charged with having communicated to a foreign power documents concerning the national defence, tried on that charge before a court-martial of his peers—then France was no longer haunted by him. The avenging ghost was laid. Calm overspread the land. Many men had openly declared that Dreyfus ran an excellent chance of being shot between his point of debarkation and the prison of Rennes; he was not even hissed. There has not been a single demonstration outside his prison worthy of ten lines in a newspaper. And—lest you should put down that fact to the congenital torpor of Rennes—in the excitable south, in the great military centres, in the manufacturing centres, in volcanic Paris itself, Dreyfus has not been the occasion of a single disturbance of any significance since he was landed in France.

Language remains violent enough and vile enough, it is true: such a furious habit of blackguarding opponents as has grown up with the Dreyfus case in France could hardly be stilled in a day. But everybody has felt more at ease. The politicians and journalists have enjoyed the affair,

no doubt, but even in Paris man cannot live on renown alone. From them, and still more from the half-indifferent, wholly perplexed mass of the people, went up a great "Ouf!" of relief. Now at last, said they, we shall have the truth, we shall have finality in this wretched affair; thereafter we shall have peace.

It might re-enforce that hope to consider how wholly irrelevant to all great material issues the Dreyfus case has been. At the first glance it seems that France has chosen to lose her head over a matter which she might just as well have let alone, which is over now, and has left her where she was before. Whether Dreyfus or Esterhazy betrayed documents, or both, or neither, it is certain that no other French officer will be tempted to do the same for years enough to come. Even if wrong has been done—if the innocent has been punished and the guilty has gone free, after all, it is only one man. And it is expedient that one man should suffer for the whole people.

So argued, and would argue again, more than half of France. And just because they argue thus, they are utterly and fatally wrong. It may be expedient to sacrifice one man for a country—when the detection of sacrifice and of expediency is left to others. But when the country argues thus itself, when it sacrifices the innocent one with its eyes open, then the sacrifice is not expedient, but ruinous. It is this truth that Colonel Picquart saw and

proclaimed three years ago. When Dreyfus was first condemned it is probable that everybody concerned—even Colonel du Paty de Clam, who examined him, and General Mercier, who procured his conviction by communicating to his judges secret documents behind his back—honestly believed him guilty. But in 1896 Picquart found reason to think that the treachery for which he was condemned had been committed by Esterhazy.

On this he wrote as follows to General Gonse: "The moment is at hand when those who are convinced that a mistake has been made with regard to them will make a desperate effort to have it rectified. . . . I think I have taken all the steps necessary for the initiative to come from ourselves. If we lose too much time the initiative will be taken by outsiders, and that, apart from higher considerations, will put us in an odious light. . . . It will be a troublesome crisis, useless, and one which we can avoid by doing justice in time." Up to that moment one man had suffered for the people, they not knowing it, and it was not altogether expedient. But from the moment the people knew and still let him suffer—from that moment began the convulsion, the dissensions, the moral putrefaction, and all the rest of the discovered distempers of France.

It was known in widening circles, first to a few soldiers, then to journalists and politicians, then to everybody who cared to be convinced, then—after the detection of Henry's forgeries—to everybody with ears to hear, that Dreyfus, if not innocent, had

not yet been proved guilty. In the face of that knowledge France still howled, "Let him suffer!" It is—to Anglo-Saxon eyes, at least—at once the grimmest and grotesquest spectacle in history—a whole nation, knowing that justice has not been done, keenly excited about the question, and yet not caring a sou whether justice is done or not. What matter, cried France, whether he is justly condemned or not? Shoot him rather than discredit the army. There is no doubt that the judgment of the Court of Cassation was received with disappointment, not to say fury, by the majority of the French people. And even of the minority—of the Dreyfusards who clamoured for revision—who shall say how few cared for doing justice to a man who might be innocent, and how many gave tongue merely because they hated the army, or the Roman Church, or Christianity, or France herself? All but the whole nation—the nation which professes itself the most civilised in the world—publicly proclaimed that it cared nothing for the first essential of civic morality. Partly the petulance of a spirited child which will not see the patent truth, partly the illogical logic of French intelligence which will commit any insanity that is recommended in the form of a syllogism, partly the sheer indifference of a brute that knows neither right nor wrong.

But why try to analyse a phenomenon so despicable? One thing is certain, common justice is the first and most indispensable condition of a free

country's existence. It is absurd to think that any cause which has led to so deliberate a jettison of justice from the national cargo can be irrelevant—can be anything but most portentous and most disastrous to the nation.

From henceforth every reflecting Frenchman knows that he may be accused of any crime, condemned on evidence he has never heard of, banished, tormented in body and mind, and that hardly a soul among his countrymen will care whether he is getting justice or injustice. They happened to take sides about Dreyfus; he may have no such luck. Dreyfus, for the rights of whose case friends and foes cared nothing, happened to be a convenient stick for anti-Semites and anti-militarists to thump the other side with; he may not. Reasoning thus, will the reflective Frenchman cultivate independence of thought, civic courage, political honesty? Not he. He will make it his business in life to cultivate a safe obscurity, and shout, if shout he must, always with the largest crowd.

The results of such a lesson upon the public life of a nation are not easy to detect at once and in glaring cases; but you may be very sure they are there, and in the long-run they will show themselves. The French citizen was fearful of unpopularity before; he will not be bolder now. The punishment of the eminent biologist Grimaux, who lost his professorship because he gave evidence for Zola, will not be lost on him. The timidity of a Casimir-

Perier, a Mercier, a Gonse, a Delagorgue—of the President of the Republic, the Minister of War, the sub-chief of the General Staff, the judge who tried Zola—who all suspected the truth and dared not discover it, will be emulated by lesser men. Cowardice will become a principle of public life.

In one respect alone can France claim pity—that she became bankrupt in justice through honouring too large a draft of her darling child, the army. The army is the adored of France. A few of the younger men, still smarting from the petty brutalities of sergeants who delight to bully boys of a better class than their own, hate it bitterly; but to France as a whole her army is her dearest treasure. In a conscriptive country the sight of troops in the street is as familiar as that of policemen on Broadway. In Germany or Austria a regiment will march past with drum and colours and hardly a head turns to follow it. But in France the passage of the regiment empties every shop, and leaves the whole street tingling with pride and enthusiasm and love. It does not diminish this affection that the last time the army took the field it was beaten and crumpled up, shot down by battalions, and carried into captivity by brigades. Quite the reverse. France feels a sort of yearning to comfort her army as a mother might comfort an unsuccessful son. And the hope of revenge for that humiliation, in which she has lived for near a generation, rests in the army alone. The army—as they have said so often—the army is France. Everybody has served

in it; everybody depends on it. The army is France.

Only that unlucky gift of bad logic led France astray again. The army being France, they argue, the honour of the army is the honour of France. Thence they pushed on to the facile fallacy. The honour of the heads of the army is the honour of the army, and therefore of France. Honour, in that sense, apparently means reputation for honour, which comes, when you work it out, to the dictum that an officer can do no wrong—or at least, if he does, nobody may say so.

The principle does not apply, apparently, to a retired general, like de Galliffet. It does not apply to a mere captain, like Dreyfus. It appears to apply to some lieutenant-colonels, such as Esterhazy, but not to others, such as Picquart.

When Esterhazy refused at the Zola trial to answer questions relative to his alleged connection with the German military attaché, the judge, M. Delagorgue, protected him. "There is something," said he, "more important than a court of justice—the honour and security of the country." "I gather," tartly replied Zola's counsel, "that the honour of the country allows an officer to do such things, but does not allow them to be spoken of."

Precisely. It came, of course, in practice to the divine right of generals. If a general's act was questioned, he responded that the interests of the national defence demanded it, and said no more.

France for the most part was quite satisfied. She

had invented a new kind of government—Cæsarism without a Cæsar.

No general was able or resolute enough to impose his authority on his fellows. There was not even a recognised clique of generals. Any general would do. De Pellieux was neither Minister of War nor Governor of Paris; yet it was really he, and not the judge and jury, who tried and condemned Zola. De la Roque was not even on the active list, yet an open letter from him to the judges and witnesses at the Rennes court-martial was paraded in almost every newspaper in France as if it had come down from Sinai. Had any Minister of War desired to make himself dictator or bring in a Pretender, such was the all-accepting meekness of the country that he could have done it. None dared, and none of the Pretenders thought the sceptre worth picking up out of the gutter. The result was that nobody knew who was ruling France at any given moment, or, indeed, knew anything at all—except that, whoever was ruling, it certainly was not the President nor the Ministry of the Republic. Summarily the Republic, during the three years of the Dreyfus agitation, abdicated.

There was nothing surprising in that: the corruption and cowardice of Ministers, Senators, and Deputies had been amply demonstrated by the scandal of Panama. It only finally shook what was already tottering.

But the effects of government by generals were new and dismal. It was bad enough that they

should arrogate power to override every authority in the state; yet to usurp is a generous crime, and to permit the usurpation of the army was in France a generous weakness. The dismal portent was the utter incapacity which the generals displayed. The Dreyfus case was their own game, and they had all the cards; but for the life of them they could not play a single one correctly. Wherever it was possible to bungle or vacillate, they bungled and vacillated.

They first admitted in the press that Dreyfus was condemned on secret documents—that is, illegally—and then denied it in the Chamber. They first contended that Dreyfus wrote the incriminating *bordereau,* because it was like his natural handwriting; then that he traced it, because it was more like Esterhazy's. They tried to entrap Picquart by bogus cryptograms that would have been childish in a comic opera. They filled the air with asseverations of their loyalty to the Republic while they were openly violating its fundamental principles. They declared that for the paramount honour of the country they would prefer a revolution to the revision of the Dreyfus case; then, when it came to the point, submitted in tame silence to the Cour de Cassation and General de Galliffet's orders. Worst of all was their behaviour, where at least you might have expected dignity and spirit, in regard to foreign Powers. They withdrew from Fashoda and renounced Egypt for ever rather than fight Great Britain, although Marchand's appearance

there was the hoped-for climax of the deliberate policy of years. One day they inspired impertinent fables about the Kaiser's communications with Dreyfus; the next they sheepishly denied them on the threats of his ambassador. The great international result of three years of government by generals is that France has virtually showed herself unfit for war by sea or land—afraid of England, terrified by Germany, the vassal of Russia—all but a second-rate Power.

"What is to become of your army in the day of danger?" cried General de Pellieux at the trial of Zola. "What would you have your unhappy soldiers do, led under fire by officers whom others have striven to discredit in their eyes? . . . It is to a mere butchery they are leading your sons." It is—or would be, if France were mad enough to fight. There would be as ruinous a collapse as in 1870. Only that would not be the work of "others," but of the leaders of the army itself. They are indeed discredited—by their own folly. Few people yet believe in their honesty, and now none in their capacity. Every man in France who knows anything of the last three years' history, in his heart distrusts his beloved army utterly. That is the sum of what the generals, with everything in their favour, have been able to do for France, for the army, and for themselves.

The degradation of politics and of the army has been equalled by that of the press. France has

never had a journal—unless we except the 'Temps' and the present incarnation of the 'Matin'—which an Anglo-Saxon public would call a newspaper; but then she does not want one. She has had journals which supply what she wants—well-considered and elegantly written essays on the subjects of the day. Such she still finds in organs like the 'Figaro' and the 'Journal des Débats'; but in the lower ranks of the press the fatal influence of the Dreyfus case has told vilely. American papers appear to an Englishman free-spoken in their attacks on opponents; but the cheapest rag in New York would blush for the recklessness, gullibility, and foulness of the baser French press. Restraints of good taste and decency are quite obsolete. You call your political opponent "a prodigy of corruption both in public and in private life; with thirty years of lies, debauchery, bribery, defamation, and calumny behind him." The Prime Minister, if you dislike his policy, you describe as "only half cleansed of the murder of Carnot, the butcher of Madagascar, Hanotaux's accomplice in the extermination of the Armenians." You never speak of General de Galliffet by name, but as "the assassin of May"; they will know whom you mean. M. Cavaignac being personally irreproachable, it is well to hark back to his ancestors, and call him the heir of two generations of murderers. Never say your opponent published his opinions; say that he vomited them. You can hardly go wrong in describing anything you dislike as ordure. With foulness go intimidation, obtuse-

ness, spiritlessness. During the trial of Zola many newspapers headed their issues for days with the names and addresses of the jurors, accompanied by suitable instigations to violence. During the second court-martial on Dreyfus an ingenious little paper in Rennes ran a serial, giving the story of an Alsatian spy in 1870 named Deutschfus, who seduced an honest girl, and then returning as an uhlan, shot her, and kidnapped her child. The credulity of such newspapers equals their violence, and they readily gulp down the wildest stories and clumsiest forgeries. And when an occasion comes, like the Fashoda crisis, in which a strong lead might fitly have been given to the nation, nothing was forthcoming except alternate bluster and puling. With one breath they thundered out what things they would do if they could; with the next they wailed for compassion because they could not do them. They inquired into the possible cause of the national decadence quite openly, and wound up with "Poor France!"

Poor France indeed! The government paralytic, her army cankered, her press putrid—what remains to her? The Church? The Church remains, but the influence of the Catholic leaders and the Catholic clergy in the cause of anti-Semitism has discredited her among all fair-minded men. The law? The law has been broken and mended to order for the advantage or the disadvantage of individuals; and while the Cour de Cassation has done its duty most honourably under

difficult circumstances, lesser magistrates have been found to surrender the law to partisanship or to fear. M. Quesnay de Beaurepaire was one of the highest judges in France, and his silly spitefulness has made him the unpitied laughing-stock of the world.

Then what remains? Why, Rennes! The storm of party bitterness, folly, weakness, knavery, has swept over from Paris into its own Lycée; yet Rennes basks unmoved under its sun. Walk down the drowsy streets. Look at the Breton people—the shopkeepers, the blue blouses, the little lace caps over women's faces bronzed with field-work. There are yet people in France who are courteous and kindly, simple and frugal and brave, who earn their living, and love their kin, and do what the priest tells them, and are ready to die for France. There are millions more of them all over the provinces. Paris looks down upon them, and the whole world outside hardly knows of them; but they are the real strength of France. It is theirs to work while Paris talks, to earn what Paris squanders, to heal when Paris wounds.

The Dreyfus case is the deepest cut which Paris has scored on the nation's body since 1870—perhaps since 1789. But it has not reached the vitals, and the provinces may heal it as they have done again and again before. The recuperative power of France has ever amazed the world, merely because the world has thought that France spelled

only Paris. The provinces do nothing else but recuperate.

Only that process, especially with a dwindling population, cannot go on for ever. There will come in the end a day—and sooner, perhaps, than we think—when Paris will have sucked the nation dry, and the provinces will have no more to give. France will still be France, but no longer a great Power. And in some ways the demand which these three years of factious frenzy have made on France is more exhausting than any of those from which she has recovered. In 1815 and 1871 it was comparatively easy for a united people to revive after foreign war. After the Revolution, when the whole fabric of society was swept away, there was a great faith wherewith to build up everything anew; and after that the miracle of Napoleon. In 1899, after the Dreyfus case, the great institutions of France still stand; but everybody knows them rotten. There is no faith; and because there is no faith, there will be no miracle.

THE JUBILEE.[1]

I.

LONDON'S NEW GAME.

London is a great big baby. Its mother, the Queen, has given it a new toy, and London has forgotten everything else, and sat down to play with it. It calls its new toy the Diamond Jubilee; a sixtieth anniversary has nothing to do either with a diamond wedding or a jubilee, but London will have it so, and children's whims must be humoured. We are going to play with our toy in our own way, and make-believe just as much as we like. Stewart tartan has nothing in particular to do with her gracious Majesty, and red, white, and blue are the colours of either France or Holland. But what does that matter? If we call them Jubilee things, they are Jubilee things; they shall be Jubilee things. Let us play with our Jubilee in the way we like.

So London—strange child—has pulled out all its little wooden boxes of bricks and piled them up all over the fronts of its houses, and has made little bows and rosettes and streamers out of bits of stuff, and picked up odds and ends of wire, and bits of glass bottles, and twisted them into stars and crowns and V.R.'s. In Piccadilly it has tried its

[1] Daily Mail, June 1897.

little fingers at drawing roses and things to put up on masts, and they have come out very much like other babies' first attempts. In one place it has even essayed a map of England: it looks like a badly-battered coal-scuttle, and the country next to it is spelled "Holand," but it is not at all discreditable for a beginning. It is adding hide-and-seek to the other game, putting up little fences across such places as the Duke of York's steps, and the north side of St. Paul's Churchyard, with little doors to pop your head out of and say "Bo!" Oh, yes, London is going to have a good romp. And London—good child—has invited all its little brothers and sisters and cousins from the provinces and the colonies to come and play with it at its party.

I suppose the Diamond Jubilee, like other things, came gradually. I suppose observant people noticed its coming, and marked how it spread itself over the town, and soaked into the brains of the people. But to anybody who comes back to London and finds it burst upon him suddenly, it is astounding, stunning, paralysing. People don't seem to notice it or to realise what it all amounts to. I feel inclined to stop people in the street—people on whom it has stolen gradually—and ask them if they know what they have been doing while I have been away. There is a learned judge: does he know that he is creeping shyly into his club up a narrow deal staircase that I should have sworn was the gallery entrance of a penny show? Does that

gallant general pacing stiffly up St. James's Street realise that he is traversing a large advertisement of Harrod's Stores? Can our City princes not have noticed that somebody has stuck a lot of carpentry on the very pediment of the Royal Exchange? Somebody else has boarded up the Law Courts, and barristers and solicitors stoop and dive in as if they were going to clean out their chicken-houses. The Houses of Parliament are all scaffolding, too, and at first, seeing no reports in the papers, I thought they had been abolished while I was away. But yesterday the flag was up again, which contradicted that theory, and left the impression that all the woodwork was put up that honourable members might practise sitting on the fence. Even to take a penny boat at Westminster you have to go under a sort of triumphal arch of joinery. I believe somebody has even been washing a house in St. Paul's Churchyard, and then stuck paper flowers all over it. The Duke of Devonshire, you would have said, was a solid, level-headed man enough, but he has let some imbecile adorn his house with a childish subtraction sum—1837-1897: seven from seven is nought, three from nine leaves six; answer, sixty; sixty years' reign; fancy! They are actually changing all London from building into furniture. One house in Piccadilly is being covered all over, first with woodwork, and then with chintz, like a new sofa. And in a few days, if it goes on as it has begun, St. Paul's Cathedral itself will be turned into a comfortable red-baize ottoman.

And the shops! They are all playing at Jubilee their very hardest. Jubilee favours, Jubilee ties, Jubilee medals, Jubilee flasks. The tailors have put bunches of Jubilee ribbons on top of their summer trouserings, though I, for one, shall refuse, absolutely, to have my next pair trimmed with red, white, and blue. I have observed a gallant bootmaker, who could hardly produce a tricolour shoe, or pretend that his guinea boots would be desirable in after-years as a memento. So he has written up, "A large stock of boots for immediate wear." "Immediate wear;" note the suggestion: buy quickly, lest the Jubilee be upon you, and you find you have no boots fit to do it justice. Only two tradesmen have I seen who kept their heads, and their self-respect, through the crisis. Both carry on business in the Borough Road. One was concealed behind a forest of gold and scarlet flags and a cataract of crimson drapery—concealed, but not obscured, for he had labelled the gorgeous mass with the legend, "Back door to barber's shop." The other had written up, "Business as usual," and in the gloom behind the hoarding I saw the collarless merchant leaning against his doorstep smoking his clay—carrying on business as usual. But nearly all the other shops have quite forgotten themselves. They have entirely forgotten what they are there to sell, and have taken to selling themselves. They have made plans of themselves, and price-lists, forgetting in their confusion that it is quite as easy to look at a shop as to look at a plan. And

there they stand, some decently covered with red, but most naked and unashamed, and offer themselves for sale in the public street! And one of them, in Fleet Street, has gone further still. "Diamond Jubilee to let," it audaciously proclaims. It sounds like an exaggeration; London has hardly got so far as that yet. Yet who knows? Nothing would surprise me less than to hear that a syndicate had bought up the Diamond Jubilee, and was letting it out for garden-parties.

I walked down Cheapside yesterday, and I give my solemn word that everybody there was talking Jubilee. I caught no other sound. Jubilee, Jubilee, Jubilee, they intoned, as if it were a kind of religious litany. I said I walked, but it would be more correct to say I ricochetted down Cheapside. Rebounding from one solid body to another, I was propelled down Cheapside. For London's cousins from the country have arrived at the party very early, and they do not altogether know the ways of the house. Great bunches of them in frock-coats and bowlers, and stiff silk gowns, insisted on standing still suddenly in the midst of the pavement in front of the Mansion House. Dear people, they didn't know how naughty it is to stop dead in front of the Mansion House, and there ought to have been somebody there to tell them not to do it. They go stumping all up and down London's house, touching London's things, fingering its monuments, and testing its internal communications. They go by the South London Electric Railway by

the half-dozen together. "Just one station to see what it feels like;" and "Have some," says Darby, pulling a neatly half-peeled orange out of his tail-pocket; "it'll freshen you up." They all freshen us up. But we can't be angry with them.

It is all very ridiculous, if you like to take it that way. But if you like to take it the other way, it is also very sublime. Go into the smoke-soiled back streets, off the line of route. There you will find in one house a poor little Union-Jack sticking up its undaunted head out of the top corner of a broken window. Next door to it is a Royal Standard—a cheap brand of flag, it appears, for it has only one side, and the back is a formless jumble of blue and red and yellow threads. Next to it again is a home-made V.R.—trace with a piece of pencil on a piece of paper; cut the red cloth to the pattern, and fasten it up with tin-tacks. You need to see the Jubilee decorations in little before you appreciate the meaning of it all in gross. These poky little flags and red letters are the key-note of it all. London is settling down to play: but all through the game it never forgets the love and reverence for the mother who inspires it.

II.

QUEEN AND EMPIRE.

The Queen's procession has passed. It is over, and we are all the richer and all the better for it.

We have seen a sight the like of which no eye has seen since the world began. We do not know whether we want to laugh or to cry. But how proud, how proud we all must be to-day!

At St. Paul's it began like any other show. We were boxed up between the pillars and the wall in a little cage of carpentry. There were pillars in front of us, and I doubt if people quite realise the massive stability of the pillars in the portico of St. Paul's until in the exercise of their professional duty they are called upon to see through them. There were also beams across the pillars, and across the line of sight. But never mind all that; we could see down Ludgate Hill. And Ludgate Hill was bedecked and bedraped as I never saw any street before in London or anywhere else. Pale purple, pale gold, and pale green—masts and hanging brackets and swinging garlands—a long, drooping vista of pillars and capitals and festoons, all softly harmonious. Any decoration can make a street brilliant if there is enough of it, but Ludgate Hill was beautiful. It was quite transformed from the sooty, busy Ludgate Hill of work-days. Under the still shy, half-watery sunlight it dipped down to the railway bridge, this also flagged and flowered for the great day, with two girls in white in the centre for a focus, and then sloped up through the Circus to Fleet Street, with the turret of Lincoln's Inn Hall crowning the distance. It was all a sheen with a mellow radiance, still enough for dignity, but yet shimmering with life. For the chief of all the

decorations were the masses of swaying white and pink in the windows, lining every house from foundation to topmost storey and massed on every roof. London had decorated itself with Londoners, and with men and women from every part of England and every inch of the world where people stand up for "God save the Queen."

It began like any other show, with a maze of gay-coloured women looking for their seats, with foot-guards marching through the barrier to the top of Ludgate Hill and lining up along the churchyard pavement. There were the ponderous vans labelled "City Commissioner of Sewers" lumbering between the banks of colour, as if the Empire had turned out to see them scatter sand. Then the place cleared; the last summer gown fluttered to its own place; the scarlet guardsmen were all in position; the last sand-cart lumbered away eastward. All was ready; we waited for it to begin.

It began, as it should begin, with the fleet. Swinging and dancing up the hill came the tilted straw hats of the naval guard of honour. The fifes screamed out, "They All Love Jack." And how they do love Jack; how the hill and the churchyard thundered! And how worthy Jack is to be loved. Clean limbs, strong bodies, trim, alert, resourceful, self-reliant, their buoyant march quivered with young life; their eyes were set with the steadfast calm of men who have been left alone with God's wonders at sea. Beside them marched their bearded captains and lieutenants, quiet, self-

possessed, intent on the business they know and love; and their middies, pink-faced boys, already men in self-command and the habit of commanding others. There was good marching after that, but no marching so elastic as this. The sight of that magnificent guard was worth the whole day's preparations in itself. We felt we could never go wrong with these men. And how good to feel that we were showing them to the representatives of every nation on earth—showing them the finest force in the whole world.

They formed up and we waited again. Another clash of music from beyond the railway bridge, and we were looking at what all England was longing to look at—the Colonials. But first a scarlet-plumed figure on a white horse pacing up the street, and all the street breaking into a roar as he came up. Roberts! Three cheers for Roberts! Bobs, Bobs, Bobs! What a proud and beautiful horse, that hardly felt the ground it trod on, and what a man! Hard-bitten, tanned face, the white moustache sitting firmly on the firm mouth, bolt upright, yet easy in the saddle—Lord Roberts was every inch a soldier and a captain of men. When Sir Charles Napier first heard Braham sing he went up to him and said, "Sir, it is men like you that make men like us." It is men like Lord Roberts that make queens like Queen Victoria.

The cheers sank, but they did not die, for before there was time for that we were looking at the Colonials. In the carriages we saw the square,

strong, invincibly sensible faces of the men who are building up great nations, new big Englands, on the other side of the world. Between the carriages rode and tramped the men who guard the building, and who carry British peace and British law into the wildest places of the earth. Lean, hard-knit Canadians, long-legged, yellow Australians, all in one piece with their horses, giant, long-eyed Maoris, sitting loosely and leaning back curiously from the waist, burned South Africans, upstanding Sikhs, tiny lithe Malays and Dyaks, Chinese with a white basin turned upside-down on their heads, grinning Hausas, so dead black that they shone silver in the sun—white men, yellow men, brown men, black men, every colour, every continent, every race, every speech,—and all in arms for the British Empire and the British Queen. Up they came, more and more, new types, new realms at every couple of yards, an anthropological museum—a living gazetteer of the British empire. With them came their English officers, whom they obey and follow like children. And you began to understand, as never before, what the Empire amounts to. Not only that we possess all these remote outlandish places, and can bring men from every end of the earth to join us in honouring our Queen, but also that all these peoples are working, not simply under us, but with us—that we send out a boy here and a boy there, and the boy takes hold of the savages of the part he comes to and teaches them to march and shoot as he tells them, to obey him and believe in him and

die for him and the Queen. A plain, stupid, uninspired people, they call us, and yet we are doing this with every kind of savage man there is. And each one of us—you and I, and that man in his shirt-sleeves at the corner—is a working part of this world-shaping force. How small you must feel in face of the stupendous whole, and yet how great to be a unit in it!

The British Empire fell in along the pavement, at the top of Ludgate Hill, and round the churchyard, and there waited. Presently there was another stir and bustle at the bottom of the hill, and another burst of brass. There came into sight under the bridge and up the hill a moving wall of men and horses. First more bluejackets, trailing their guns behind them, hauling on to the ropes so steadily and evenly that the guns seemed to be alive and walking of themselves. Then cavalry and guns—now massed bands crashing out music, now serried squadrons, now gliding horse-batteries. They came like a wall, as close, as perfectly even, and level and smooth; the squadrons looked as if they had been put together with a spirit-level and trimmed with a plane. The approach to the Cathedral was a blaze of blue and scarlet; the sun on swords and helmets laced the blue and scarlet with gold. The eye was filled with splendour, but fresh splendour came crowding in on it. The advancing pageant shifted and loosened and came up in opener order. But as the mass of colour became less massive, it became more wonderfully coloured.

Here, riding three and three, came a kaleidoscope of dazzling horsemen—equerries and aides-de-camp and attachés, ambassadors and princes, all the pomp of all the nations of the earth. Scarlet and gold, azure and gold, purple and gold, emerald and gold, white and gold—always a changing tumult of colours that seemed to list and gleam with a light of their own, and always blinding gold. It was enough. No eye could bear more gorgeousness; no more gorgeousness could be, unless princes are to clothe themselves in rainbows and the very sun. The prelude was played, and now the great moment was at hand. Already the carriages were rolling up full of the Queen's kindred, full of her children and children's children. But we hardly looked at them. Down there, through an avenue of eager faces, through a storm of white waving handkerchiefs, through roaring volleys of cheers, there was approaching a carriage drawn by eight cream-coloured horses. The roar surged up the street, keeping pace with the eight horses. The carriage passed the barrier; it entered the churchyard; it wheeled left and then right; it drew up at the very steps of the Cathedral; we all leaped up; cheers broke into screams, and enthusiasm swelled to delirium; the sun, watery till now, shone out suddenly clear and dry, and there—and there——

And there was a little, plain, flushed old lady. All in black, a silver streak under the black bonnet, a simple white sunshade, sitting quite still, with the corners of her mouth drawn tight, as if she were

trying not to cry. But that old lady was the Queen, and you knew it. You didn't want to look at the glittering uniforms now, nor yet at the bright gowns and the young faces in the carriages, nor yet at the stately princes—though by now all these were ranged in a half circle around her. You couldn't look at anybody but the Queen. So very quiet, so very grave, so very punctual, so unmistakably and every inch a lady and a Queen. Almost pathetic, if you will, that small black figure in the middle of these shining cavaliers, this great army, this roaring multitude; but also very glorious. When the other kings of the world drive abroad, the escort rides close in at the wheels of the carriage; the Queen drove through her people quite plain and open, with just one soldier at the kerbstone between her and them. Why not? They are quite free; they have no cause to fear her; they have much cause to love her. Was it not all for her—the gala trappings of the streets, the men and horses and guns, the living walls of British men and women? For the Queen summed up all that had gone before, all the soldiers and sailors, the big-limbed colonial, the strange men from unheard-of islands oversea. We knew now what that which had come before all stood for; we knew as we had never known before what the Queen stands for. The Empire had come together to revere and bless the mother of the Empire. The mother of the Empire had come to do homage to the one Being more majestic than she.

There were the archbishops and the bishops and

the deans in gold and crimson caps and white and orange and gold-embroidered vestments, waiting on the steps. There, through the gaps in the pillars and scaffoldings, you could see all her Ministers and great men—a strange glimpse of miniature faces as in some carefully laboured picture where each face stands for an honoured name. All stood, and the choir sang the Te Deum. The Queen put on her glasses and looked gravely at the shoal of grave faces. Next rose up a melodious voice intoning prayers. The Queen bowed her head. Then the whole choir and company outside the Cathedral and the whole company in the stands and at the windows and on the housetops and away down the street, all standing, all uncovered, began to sing the Hundredth Psalm. "Come ye before Him and rejoice:" the Queen's lips were tight, and her eyes—perhaps it was fancy—looked dim. But then "Three cheers for the Queen!" and the dean—pious man!—was wildly waving that wonderful crimson cap, and the pillars and roofs were ringing as if they must come down. Then "God Save the Queen"—a lusty peal, till you felt drowned in sound. The Queen looked up and smiled. And the Queen's smile was the end and crown of it all. A smile that broke down the sad mouth, a smile that seemed half-reluctant—so wistful, yet so kind, so sincere, so motherly.

God Save the Queen!

III.

"TO VIEW THE ILLUMINATIONS."

(*An Agricultural Household on an Omnibus.*)

We are not showing anything at the Royal this year—not, of course, that our beasts are not good enough to show. The truth is they are too good—and assuredly too much beloved—to be exposed to the journey to Manchester and back in weather like this. So it was felt that something might be done with a clear conscience to celebrate the Diamond Jubilee. To leave the sacred beasts by daytime was naturally out of the question, so it must be some evening. The illuminations it must be. The illuminations from an omnibus! And Wednesday would be a nice quiet day for it. On Wednesday the excitement of Tuesday would be dying away; we could just nip in on Wednesday, when everybody else had seen the show and was going early to bed. Nothing, moreover, was expected to foal, farrow, calve, or hatch on Wednesday. Nothing even showed any sign of immediate death. Heather and the infant calf were doing as well as could be expected, and no more bulletins were to be issued; the foals and the goslings would be neither more nor less incorrigible alone than with nine infants to correct their misdemeanours; Peter and John, wrongfully accused of diphtheria, had picked up wonderfully under a strengthening diet

of beef, brandy, roup-pills, and the dogs' dinners. Yes, for one evening, perhaps, we could dare to leave them alone. And the gardener's brother-in-law had kindly consented to patrol the place, firing salutes from a shot-gun to the glory of Her Majesty and the confusion of all poachers.

The omnibus was duly hired—five guineas, to be paid out of the profits of the barren Shetland mare, when anybody has the sense to pay the price for her. The railway carriage had been reserved, both ways. The children were all carefully festooned with Jubilee medals and Jubilee ribbons and filled to the brim—filled, in Willie's sad case, even to overflowing—with Jubilee cake and tea. All was ready—when the ducks, the pious ducks, the only children who had never given a moment's anxiety, seized the occasion to begin to die. They actually refused food; they flopped themselves on to their backs, waggled their yellow legs heavenward, and quacked feebly at the sun. We gasped. In any other beast it would have been but natural; if the ducks were going to turn against us and die we were ruined indeed. All was done that man can do; it always is at our farm, where prodigies of labour balance the want of land and capital; and it is generally done in vain. However, we buried the ringleader, the ungrateful wretch that had set the example of decease, isolated his two principal accomplices, after steeping them carefully in water, and soaked their run from innumerable cans and buckets—think of it, in the sun of Wednesday

afternoon!—till it was as near a pond as is consistent with not swimming off marketable flesh. They came to a better frame of mind towards evening, and condescended to cram their crops as usual. We had done all we could. We tried not to think of them; we paraded at the back-gate, twenty-six strong—twenty-six weak would, perhaps, be the correcter way to put it—to be joined by a flying column of three at London Bridge. We marched to the station; we hoisted in the cake-laden infants; we were off. To view the illuminations!

We beguiled the journey with light-hearted prattle about the misadventures which might probably befall us. The ordinary imaginative mind dwelt deeply on the likelihood that the omnibus might upset. The fancy of bandy-legged, owl-eyed Septimus soared higher; the two ruling passions of his life being engines and hospitals, his mind and cheerful conversation ran rather to railway accidents. He estimates the desirability of a residence by the probability of finding an engine standing in the nearest station; while, having been an inmate of most of the hospitals, and having had his toys unintentionally broken by half the eminent surgeons of London, he is an acknowledged expert on fractured limbs. So that when he declared of his personal knowledge that the rails were breaking under the stress of Jubilee traffic, he was listened to with quaking attention. Until Eddy cut him out with the apprehension that the illuminations might set his new straw hat on fire.

Amid general disappointment all arrived safely at London Bridge. But the sight of the clean omnibus standing empty and expectant paid for all. An omnibus with horses, driver, and conductor complete, that can't go without you, that stops and goes, fast or slow, and turns up this street or that at a word from the master or the missis—this is not a joy vouchsafed to everybody. The top of an omnibus, in theory, holds about eighteen; we got twenty-seven on. With loud and prolonged screams we debouched into the Borough.

Ah! Ee! I-i-i! Oh-h-h! Uh-h-h-h! Every vowel was tried, but no vowel could do justice to the emotions! Look at them flags! Look at they seats! Look at them flowers! Look at they people! I am thankful to think that we were not wholly unconspicuous, even in the Borough. The untutored inhabitants tried some of their local wit upon us, but it was quite wasted; we took it quite literally. When they asked—what more natural?—where we went to school, we gave the name readily and politely, explaining that we had a month's holiday, and meantime were having lessons at home. When they inquired—as anybody would who did not know us, and how well we can take care of ourselves—whether our mothers knew we were out, we introduced our mothers, as a reassuring proof that they were out too. The driver kindly pointed out the principal objects of interest, such as St. Thomas's Hospital and the Houses of Parliament; but, though we came from the country, we hardly

needed it. Nearly all of us had been in London before; some of us know it very well, though we are succeeding in forgetting it. London has not behaved well to our household, taking it as a whole. We can get on quite well without disease or starvation, or being sold for a penny, or assaulted with intent to kill, and we don't mind if we never see London again. Still there is a certain satisfaction in knowing the river Thames when you see it. And Joe, despite the fact that he all but cut both hands off in the pond-sluice the other day and still reeks of iodoform, perked up at the sight of a racin' four-oar. "I know all this place, I do," he remarked, confidently, having spent the first three of his eleven years in Chelsea. We know London well enough, some of us; only as the parts we know best are mostly being pulled down by the County Council, or raided by the police, we mayn't know it very long.

Hence there are some things new even to us. V-I-N-O-L-I-A going in and out in red and white; how is that for a wonder of the world? The crowns and stars and V.R.'s—a mistake, by the way, for we know that queen begins with Q, not R—and 1837's and 1897's and "God—bless—our—Queen"; why, we can read it all. Look at that light spinning round! You'd think 'twould put he out to spin round like that. Look at that bridge across the street. Now we can't go any farther; we didn't know there were so many omnibuses in the world. And Eddy, relieved by finding his hat still uncon-

sumed, remarked, "It must be lovely to be a queen." If Eddy were queen this sort of Jubilee would happen every night. But to Seppy's mind the decorations presented one unexplained feature which had to be cleared up. "What happened in 1897?" he wanted to know.

Then Tubsy spoke. Tubsy does not speak often, but when he does he speaks to the point. He is employed on the lighter branches of farm-work, at which he is worth some four men and a boy, on a living wage of about a penny a month. When he reaches the age of four he may receive even more. Already he is wont to groom the cows with a dandy brush, and then stands long before them in silent adoration. "Don't they look nice now I've done they up," he remarks at last. His special charge is the calves. "I think the caaves love me," he reflected the other day, and I think they do; only they know that the great sahib Tubsy is not a person to be trifled with. Now Tubsy had leaned against the rail of the omnibus by the space of an hour, his head tilted upwards like a drinking fowl's, gazing raptly upon the variegated coming and going of that blessed word "Bovril" as one who is caught up into Paradise and sees wonderful things. Then he turned slowly round, and his dark, solemn eyes fell on all of us in turn. The lips parted in the nut-brown face, and he put a question to the company: "Who's mindin' the caaves?"

It was the voice of conscience. Who, if it came to that, was minding the diseased ducks? Who

was seeing that the Little Minister, that promising stallion, was not chasing the fowls? The foster-mother had refused to go below 110 in the heat of the day; who was regulating its temperature now? The omnibus still crawled on, but the illuminations had lost something. "I bet there's a V.R. near that crown," said Eddy, with a well-meaning desire to liven things; nobody took him up. The thought that the beasts might want refreshment and nobody there to give it began to weigh upon all minds. Suppose we missed the train and there was nobody to milk the cows in the morning?

It was more than anybody could be asked to bear. We got down and left the omnibus derelict in a block; each grown person seized a child, and in columns of families we made for the station. We got there panting—with thirty-seven minutes to spare. We piled ourselves up in a corner, and some of us went to sleep and some had beer, and we got large glasses of soda-water and poured them down the children. But what an air, when we got out at our own station, where the people know us. The cool and the freshness, the hay and the roses! It was good to get home, and nothing had died except one chicken. Thank goodness! "And I've enjoyed myself very much," observed Willy, complacently. As he had been sick steadily in train and omnibus, we may assume, *a fortiori*, that the others enjoyed themselves too.

IV.

THE GREAT REVIEW.

Portsmouth as an institution is the headquarters of the British navy. Portsmouth as a dwelling-place is a strange mingling of a seventeenth-century country town, an eighteenth-century watering-place, a flashy seaside resort of to-day, and a slummy seaport of all time.

Houses as quaint as Staple Inn, back squares as dignified as Georgian Brighton or Weymouth, are sandwiched between eligible boarding-houses and fishy rum-shops. Portsmouth is a history of the British navy worked out in buildings. But to-day, old and new, all wear the same livery of blazing bunting. Bunting, we may assume, is plentiful in Portsmouth if anywhere, but you would have hardly thought there was so much of it in any given town on earth as Portsmouth is clothed with to-day. You cannot see the town for the flags. Portsmouth is tapestried with them, walled with them, roofed with them, everything but floored with them. Every kind of flag in every kind of place; none of the foreign blue-jackets need go unhappy for want of his national colours. The crescent of Turkey flaps across the street, side by side with the chrysanthemum of Japan. Next to them the Kaiser's eagle pecks at a recondite ensign bearing a sun in the left-hand top corner, and a forest of blue and white bars, which may stand for Uruguay or San Domingo or Liberia for aught I know. The sailors of

the King of Siam's yacht will doubtless find their native elephant displayed in its due place, though I have not discovered it yet.

Portsmouth is at this moment not merely the headquarters of the British navy, but the generous host of every navy that musters in the world. There is no mistake about the loyalty of Portsmouth. You may not find here Ludgate Hills or St. James's Streets, Arcadian avenues of green or fairy palaces of light. Portsmouth is a plain town, mainly engaged in sending Her Majesty's ships to sea as efficiently as may be, and has neither time nor money for pantomime effects; but having started out to beflag itself, Portsmouth has beflagged itself with a will from top to bottom, from town-hall and grand hotel to lodging-house and cottage. The elegant villas of Southsea are gay, but the alleys of Gosport are even gayer. Look down each narrow, dark, smelly little court, you will find it hung across and across with flags—flags drooping out of the windows, flags spread-eagled on the walls. "Long hath she reigned!" is by now, perhaps, a little trite as a piece of news, even though it be reinforced with the figures that give arithmetical demonstration of its truth. All the same, you don't call such vigorous attention to the fact unless you are glad that she hath reigned long. But judged by such signs, the poorest streets of Portsmouth are very glad indeed. The popular joy goes much deeper into the back streets than it does in London itself.

But comparisons are invidious. The whole country is as loyal as itself, and it could not be more. On the way down, every suburb, country town, and village — Surbiton, Guildford, Haslemere, Liss — added its show of flags. Every little labourer's cottage had its Union-Jack stuck jauntily at the top of the highest tree. It is the whole nation which is celebrating this Jubilee—there is no room to doubt that—and patriotic satisfaction in this certainly went a long way to mitigate the sufferings of the journey. For all the world is pouring out of London, just as a few days ago it was pouring in.

The booking-office at Waterloo suggested a combination of the boat-race, Ascot, and Cowes. People slung with field-glasses swarmed up and down the packed trains, and then sank weakly back to wait for the next, which was coming in five minutes, rather more tightly packed than the last. All the trains are coming down, but none are going back. I saw a corpulent Midland special calmly bivouacked on the South-Western line at Fratton; they are waiting till after the great to-morrow, for an Englishman who leaves Portsmouth to-day is no countryman of Nelson's. Where in the meantime Portsmouth hides its rolling stock I know not, unless it has stacked it all in the docks. There is plenty of room in them, for all Her Majesty's ships have gone out to Spithead to keep Her Majesty's Jubilee.

Portsmouth is patrolled by the intelligent stranger—cockney, countryman, and foreigner. He is

here in all his kinds and all his thousands, flourishing his guide-book in the native face, and Portsmouth is probably beginning to learn as much about its local antiquities and objects of interest as we have lately been forced to do in London. Camera on back, studious of the guide-book and with peering eye cocked above it, the tourist makes his house-to-house visitation of the town, or perambulates the empty dockyard, or pays his penny toll with righteous indignation at Haslar Bridge.

But the chief sight at Portsmouth remains—its ships and men. Just now both ships and men are supplemented from all the nations of the earth till Portsmouth is like an enlarged and improved reproduction of the blockade of Crete.

The foreign bluejacket roams unchecked from fruit-stall to tobacco-shops, conversing affably, as his manner is, without understanding the inhabitants or being understood by them. This afternoon there were black-browed little Spaniards, tall, dull-eyed Russians, and heavy-limbed Germans all passing up and down the streets, under their own swinging flags and everybody else's. It may be blind-eyed national prejudice, but none of them seemed to me to possess just that combination of supple strength and resourceful resolution that is the hall-mark of our own beloved bluejacket. But it is not polite to say this just now, especially seeing that it is quite understood that they are all fine fellows. Essentially harmonious and joyful was a party of three German bluejackets, being shown

round by a bugler from a line regiment. He was prattling away in London English, and they answered fluently in North German. They were making remarks about the shops: he was under the impression that the subject of conversation was Spanish bluejackets. "They none of 'em understand English," he said, not without a touch of scorn.

And what about the fleet all this time? Well, the fleet is there, I know on the very best authority. But to-day the fleet is lying out there between Portsmouth and the Isle of Wight, ship after ship, line upon line. But for to-day the fleet has veiled itself in haze from premature curiosity. You will see it in all its majesty in due season. Meanwhile, the sky over Portsmouth is thick and heavy, as with the soot of many chimneys. You may stand and look out to sea, but you will hardly find the fleet. The grey sea is scored by the wake of a fleet of launches coming in and going out; here and there is a white boat with men in blue tugging rhythmically at the oars, and a dark still figure in the stern. But the boats dive behind the curtain of mist, and you cannot trace them to their homes.

Only when the sun shines can you see the pale gleaming outline of what looks like an enormous city. Left and right it stretches for miles and miles, till it is lost in the thicker clouds. In front of you it towers up eagerly to giddy heights. Very thickly built the city seems, with black foundations and lighter, airier structure above. Here you can see

a row of factory stacks; there a slim mast. That shadowy city is the British fleet. Not all of it, not nearly all of it, but as much as we are going to show this time, without taking away anything from any of our squadrons abroad. The black foundation is the hulls, the lighter upper storeys are the superstructures, the stacks are funnels, and the minarets, masts. Through your glass you can make out some of it,—a black venomous destroyer with a head like an adder's, a more graceful-bodied cruiser, a great battleship riding like a fortress, with a torpedo-boat just discernible against its dark side. You can make out quite enough to feel lost and annihilated in the presence of so many tons of weight, so many knots of motive-power, so many smithereens of destructive force. But all that is for to-morrow. For to-day let it remain the ghostly city, the dim promise of a wonder such as the world never yet saw.

V.

THE GREAT REVIEW—(*continued*).

All through the week of Jubilee our English weather has maintained its splendid reputation. In Portsmouth the last two or three days it has even exceeded it. Sun-striking heat on Thursday; sullen haze on Friday; a perfect day for the review; a perfect deluge for coming home in; a perfect night for the illuminations; and a general epilogue of mug and fog for the slack day. After it, our colonial

and foreign friends cannot complain that our famous weather has not shown all its phases. On Friday night it looked any odds on a fog which would have muffled up the fleet till you had to grope after it ship by ship. But on Saturday morning the mist had all cleared.

The place had filled itself to bursting with dishevelled hordes, who had dozed throughout the night in special trains, and arrived to find breakfast in Portsmouth almost as undiscoverable a quantity as disloyalty. How many people had come to see the great show I do not know, and it does not particularly matter. It is sufficient that if there had been many more they would have had to feed on the air and sit in the sea. At any rate, there was a very vast multitude, and they had come to see a very vast and moving spectacle. Breakfast or no breakfast, they did well to come. They were going to see the right arm of the British Empire.

It looked as though the whole people of the country was emptying itself out into the sea. The channel out of the harbour was like the way to St. Paul's last Tuesday—a hurrying pilgrimage, with boats in place of men and women. Big white pulling boats, and little twin-funnelled steam-pinnaces from the fleet, thick-set government tugs, shining to-day like the trimmest of steam-yachts, painted tripper steamers, big, towering ocean liners,—they trooped at each other's heels, all streaming out to see the fleet. Every boat was black and blue, red and white, with soldiers and sailors and plain men and women. The

plain man and woman do not usually take much notice of the fleet of which they are part owners. But a week like this was just the time to take stock of it—to see the most wonderful assemblage of sea power there had ever been. It was a thing to be seen at all costs, just for the sake of seeing. But it was also a thing with a good deal of thinking behind; the seeing a lesson as well as a spectacle.

And when we steamed out along the tortuous channel, between heavy old stone forts, breakwaters, railway sidings, beaches, and piers buzzing with crowded people, there, sure enough, was the fleet plain to view. Not gleaming mysteriously through a gauze of mist as it had done the day before, but quite plain—hard outlines for the nearer visions, softer suggestions for the farther; but all quite unmistakably plain and solid, very solid. The fleet was a very hard fact, quite motionless. The big ships stood up majestically on the calm, green water, and the little ones lay along it meaningly. At first view the fleet was in no particular order that revealed itself. It was simply a crowd of ships, a flower-garden of signal-flags, a scaffolding of masts and spars, a factory of funnels, a long continuous wall of black hulls. In fact, they were gathered so thick that you could not see through them to the coast of the Isle of Wight. Away to the west they stretched—away, away, away; masts and funnels and black hulls running one into another for ever and ever. Right away westward ran the line, fainter and fainter, but there was no end to it.

As our boat came up and began to circle round them, the whole shape of the fleet suddenly changed. Out of chaos came suddenly the precisest order. For now we had come abreast of the lines, and could see the formation in which the ships lay at their moorings. First came torpedo-boats, and the little devils were moored so true that they looked like one vessel. From the tall liner I was on you looked down on to the black lane of the boats. What with the flags and the crowd of men's heads, it looked for all the world like a street decorated and crowded for Jubilee Day. Then the destroyers are more devilish than the boats, their long low sides cuddled down to the lapping water. Next, cruisers: a vista of graceful masts and tall, graceful funnels, very unlike the squat, dogged-looking funnels of the destroyers. And last, we came to the double line of stately battleships, rising out of the water like kings, strong and confident. Every kind of vessel, powerful or swift, according to her kind. You looked down the dwindling avenues between their even lines until once again they ran together in the distance, but still there was no end to it. You were not seeing the fleet at all, it suddenly occurred to you. You were only trying to see what nobody with only one pair of ordinary human eyes ever could see. It would not come together into one sight—it was far too big for that. But what the eye lost the mind gained. Look at all you could take in, and then multiply it by about ten—that was the fleet lying here to be reviewed. But

then you had seen any number of ships beside, lying in the docks and basins—some just completing, some a mere skeleton of girders, some, alas! quite fit to go to sea, but with no crews to take them. And when you had added on that, it was time to remember that we have a fleet in China waters, a fleet in the Pacific and the Indian Ocean, in the North and South Atlantic, and in Australasia. Not a ship more than we need. But add up all that, and then you will begin to get an idea. Yet no, you won't. Still, you will be nearer to an idea of the tremendous might of the machine which holds together the British Empire.

You got a suggestion on Tuesday how big the Empire is on land. On Saturday you added an inkling how big it is on every sea. We are great in fertile Canada and Australia, in populous India and Africa, and in the rich islands of East and West, because we are yet greater on the naked sea.

That was the great lecture propounded by the lines of warships on Saturday.

People here said that the review, as a show, was less than exciting, that it was even a little dull, that if there had been ten or twenty ships less or more it would have looked exactly the same. Possibly. Only the lecture would not have been the same, as the point was the question of the fleet, and the greatness of the need for it—at once a boast and a warning. And yet to my eyes the mere sight was a monstrously fine one. A warship is fine beyond almost any other sight there is to be seen. Beauty

lies in expression, they say, and there is nothing more expressive than a warship. It has at once the buoyant mobility of life and the heavy solidity of matter. The long guns run level, and if the ports suggest horrible destructiveness — tons of steel tossed about here and there and crushing men under them to jelly,—at the same time the brilliant polish on the guns, a polish you could shave by, is very human, and speaks of affection for the grim beauties that is as pretty as the guns are terrible. And there was a kind of pathos, too, in a tiny little launch that was gliding in and out of the lines with a very frothy wave behind her. That was the Turbinia—an experiment in a new method of propulsion, already the fastest thing afloat, and with possibilities of further speed almost illimitable. If that shrimp of a turbinet comes to anything, all these black and yellow leviathans are done for. So they are if somebody invents a flying-machine; so they are if you top them with a torpedo. All the tops of steel, the labour of years, the millions of money, the masses of ingenuity, and the treasures of devotion and courage,—they are all gone in five minutes. That is the pathos and the beauty of a warship; it is so very strong and so very weak.

There was plenty of time to moralise about this or anything else you felt a leaning to during the long wait between taking up your berth and the arrival of the Prince of Wales. But at about two o'clock there was a gun fired: he was there. There was a bustle in the ships, and some blue-black

figures already lying out along the yards sprang up and stood motionless till the ship seemed rigged with living men. In others, the newest ships, too sternly new and businesslike to be fitted with the tackle for such amenities, the bluejackets lined the sides and bulwarks, with scarlet marines to give a dash of gaiety to what was rather smart and purposeful than gaudy. It was not nearly so variegated as Tuesday, despite the signal-flags, but always barring the Queen,—why was she not there?—it was not a whit less majestic, for as the Prince's procession reached each division the ships saluted. The banging guns from all these ships would have made a very heavy action on land. They were firing from their smallest guns; but even that probably meant as much energy, certainly as much noise and smoke, as a big army all through a day's fighting. In a minute half the fleet had vanished—blotted out by the coils of lazy smoke, guns crashing, bands blaring, thousands of lusty seamen cheering. The inspecting yachts and the big steamers come by. Among the last was the huge Campania, dwarfing almost everything, and steaming very slowly lest she might tread on the toes of some of the little ones. One by one the boats passed away behind the smoke.

That was the review. Crawling carefully back, we ran into the thunder-storm. It came up blackly from the Solent before we could say "It's raining." The decks were a tumult of dancing water, lightning was splitting the sky with rents of fire. Thunder

was cracking like to deafen the very guns. The ships stood up, tall and wan, against the lurid sky. The firmament seemed to be bursting asunder. The ships stood up to it unmoving and unflinching. What is a storm to them?

But some colonial officers aboard us admitted that they would hardly have believed it of a temperate climate, and we natives were very proud to have been able to show it to them. For the most part the colonials were too dazed with wonder and joy at the aspect of the fleet to take much notice of any thunder-storm. They could hardly speak about it, and when they did, it was in half-tones, solemnly: "It has been a wonderful day to us—a wonderful day."

The thunder-storm was only an episode. Having done its business, it went dutifully away, and left the field clear for the illuminations. Out on the sea front you could see the lights of the fleet like glowworms in the dark. Then suddenly there sounded a gun; and as I moved along Southsea Common there appeared in the line a ship of fire. A ship all made of fire—hull and funnels and military masts with fighting tops. And then another, and another, and another. The fleet revealed itself from behind the castle, ship after ship traced in fire against the blackness. From the head of Southsea there still came on fresh wonders of grace and light and splendour, stretching away, still endlessly as in the daytime, till they became a confused glimmer six miles away. It was the fleet, and yet not

the fleet. You could recognise almost any ship by her lines and rig—just as if it had been in day, only transmuted from steel and paint into living gold. The admirals still flew their flags as in the day, only to-night the flags were no longer bunting, but pure colour. The hard heavy fleet vanished, and there came out in its stead a picture of it magically painted in pure light.

For three hours the miracle of brightness shone wondrously at Spithead. At half-past eleven or so the Prince returned the second time as before, and the golden fleet sent a thunder of salute after him. Then, as I stood on the high roof of the Central Hotel, the clock struck twelve, and before my eyes the golden fleet vanished—vanished clean away in a moment. You could just see it go. Here half a ship broken off, there masts and funnels hanging an instant in the air. It all vanished, and nothing at all was left except the rigging lights, trembling faintly once more on the dark sea.

Was it a dream? Was the fleet melted indeed into the air? We had seen the fleet that day, and we knew better. The great day was passed, but we knew the fleet was there. We took that away with us to remember: the fleet was there.

THE FEAST OF ST. WAGNER.[1]

I.

As we crawled nearer to Bayreuth on the dusty Sunday afternoon, we seemed to be entering upon an outlying province of the United States of America. To be sure there were Germans enough—high-busted, bare-elbowed German girls and German young men in light-coloured reach-me-downs and straw hats with a binding of black ribbon round the tilted brim. But these all dropped off as the train dawdled at each wayside station: they were only going to the usual diversions of a country Sunday afternoon. The Americans were going to Bayreuth, and the German language began to die away in the American.

All down the long train there buzzed the American tongue; out of each window looked a group of American girls. Four girls and a woman to one elderly weary-looking man was the proportion, as always; and the man, as always, was working away at baggage, and porters, and guards, and refreshments for the comfort of the girls. All were taking their pleasure as their manner is on Sundays and holidays—talking, talking, talking, in a perpetual gush of chatter about things that did not matter.

[1] Daily Mail, July 1897.

But it was much that they were not talking about Wagner.

Bavaria was going to sleep under the heavy sun. But when at last the train strolled into Bayreuth, Bavaria was awake indeed. It was a queer mixture. The little old town is like any other little old town in this part of the world—old brown houses that seem nearly all old brown tiles, the deep-eaved roof sloping heavenwards to double the height of the windows. They look like toys which have been shut up unplayed with for a century. But the big, cobble-stoned, triangular square outside the station was quite full. The station hotel had flags of all nations flying. Crowds lined the station steps, and packed right back as if a royal procession were coming. Partly they were peasants, who don't quite know who Wagner is, looking on the tourists, who surged out in a maddening torrent, with amusement and some contempt.

The Bavarian peasant is like any other peasant, only more so. The rough brown suit that covers his big limbs is not browner than his face; only the square set of his shoulders reminds you of those three years in the army, and his heavy movements and big wide-awake can never loosen him quite into the mere boor again. But if the peasant smiled to see these crowds of strangers fighting their way into Bayreuth from heaven knows where, the true Bayreuther did not. He knew what they were all there for—they had come to make his fortune.

I fancied last night that Bayreuth didn't care.

They were promenading the town just as on every other Sunday night, whipping off their hats to each other, and tucking them for a moment under their elbow, just as every other German. There were accordions playing in the little outlying beer-houses, and bare-headed girls waltzing together. I had seen two Englishmen in my hotel, hideous in shapeless dust-cloaks, but very reverentially eating the *rosbif* of the holy city. After that it seemed horrible that the accordions were not playing at least the overture to "Tannhäuser," and I marvelled that Bayreuth should be so insensible.

But I was wrong. Certainly Wagner came to Bayreuth, and not Bayreuth to Wagner, so that Bayreuth had a right to remain unresponsive if it liked. But it did not. It briskly grasped what may be called the mark-and-pfennig aspect of the Meister's genius. When I took up my room at the hotel the waiter called my attention to the price, marked in plain figures on the door. "To avoid misunderstandings later," he sweetly remarked, and perhaps the precaution is a wise one. My hotel is a good little inn enough, though nobody could call it first-class. But the proprietor has incautiously left about a little memorandum with the price of each room marked thereon. If they are all full, as they are, it comes to something over £9 a-day, and nearly £300 for the month's season—not half bad for a little country inn, not counting profits on meat and drink, and considering the value of money in Germany. And all Bayreuth does the same.

A barber who shaved me had quickly put his price up to 3¾d., a great sum in this country; but then he had assisted at the final rehearsal of "Parsifal," had even helped make up the artists, and the extra 1¼d. was not more than his conversation was worth. Of course there is no shop without its bust of Wagner in the window, from terra-cotta an inch high to colossal plaster of Paris, and the last looks very engaging against a background of little tin uhlans. Moreover, Bayreuth does not wait for you to come and buy; it comes round to you with motherly care, and insists that you should equip yourself thoroughly against the festival. "Have you got your book of leitmotives?" said an old lady to me, quite sharply, this morning. I dared not say that leitmotives were of no use to me, for fear I should be slapped, or not allowed to go to the performance; so I weakly said I had. After all, to sell such things is what the shop is for. But I never, never thought I should live to see the orchestral score of "Parsifal" hawked about the streets like an evening newspaper.

While I have been writing this little bit more special trains from everywhere have been coming in, and have flooded the place with English girls. It is curious that Wagner seems to appeal with special potency to the unmarried girl, and I don't know whether he would be altogether pleased if he knew it. At this moment the marriageable female population of Bayreuth appears to be something like eighty per cent or so of the whole. When I

went down to lunch I found the restaurant quite full of English girls—girls in shirts and white belts and blue serge skirts. They order their lunch very distinctly in English, and are rather annoyed when the stupid fellow doesn't understand them. But, luckily, our hotel has two English-speaking waiters. The senior one, I fancy, is responsible for the inscription, "Here are carriages cheap, to let," which appears in all the rooms of the hotel. To-day both are in great form; they even swagger a little, and talk to each other in English. "More little spoons," cries one. "No little spoons left, only small spoons," answers his fellow. There are no marks to-day—only shillings. The poor native German is quite wiped out. The German is not, as a rule, the most retiring of men; but to-day he sits disconsolately waiting to be served. It is even pathetic to see him furtively feel at the horn of his waxed moustache, fearing that it may have gone out of curl, and that this is responsible for the unwonted neglect of his wishes. Meanwhile the English study maps of Bayreuth, and wonder intelligently that there are so many Roman Catholic churches—as if they expected to find the Wesleyan connection especially strong in Bavaria.

In the aspect of most of these ladies there is something that rebukes me. There is a look of high purpose in their eye as they order lunch, which tells me that I am wrong to take my food as food; to-day it is the sustenance in the strength of which one hears "Parsifal." They look very coldly on the bar-

maid of the restaurant, who wears her sleeves short at the elbows, and a little short at the neck—surely a very innocent device, and eminently calculated to lessen the heat of the weather and increase the sale of beer. But one should not consider these vanities to-day. To-day one may, indeed, drink Rhine wine; but, again, as a sort of sacrament, as if it came out of the Grail. Though there is, indeed, one jolly red-faced dame in a Jubilee ribbon, who seems to feel that a country where you can get a pint of wine for a shilling is one that she has neglected too long. What is she doing in Bayreuth, I wonder? For that matter, what of the earnest-eyed young lady who is explaining "Parsifal" to her friend? "There's not very much tune in it," she says, "but at the end there's the Good Friday music—very pretty." I can't leave off thinking what Wagner—who was not the most tolerant of men towards mediocrity—what poor Wagner would think to-day if he could be present at his apotheosis.

But now the carriages are filling up, and rolling off towards the theatre. We must go. Have you got your tickets, your opera-glasses, your German and English texts, your orchestral score, your map of Bayreuth, your life of Wagner, your commentary, and your chart of leitmotives? Now! Hush: Let us go.

II.

It was beginning. The huge wedge-shaped theatre was black as night. Fifteen hundred people hardly breathed. Yet, though you saw nothing and

heard nothing, you could feel the air charged with expectancy. Up over the living darkness stole the first soul-thrilling bars of the prelude to "Parsifal."

Nevertheless it had taken a good hour to get the multitude settled down into its proper disposition of rapt attention. It had begun to take its way to that theatre — the Feast-play-house is the right name for it in Bayreuth—by half-past two—an hour and a half before the first note was due. Between the regular lines of trees rolled two streams of carriages, some hastening to set down, the others to find somebody to take up again. Under the trees stood the inhabitants of Bayreuth watching the stream go by; there jostled them a long column of foot-passengers, moving perpetually at a steady two miles an hour up the gentle rise towards the theatre. There were English, Americans, French, and Germans, Gentiles and Jews, soldiers and civilians—it was strange to see cavalry lieutenants in uniform, the full score under their arms, going to hear an opera at three in the afternoon—old men and little girls, shaggy-haired virtuosi, and untutored children of nature from the western prairies.

You may smile at Wagner as you will; yet, genius or charlatan, it was no ordinary personality that could draw together this motley crowd in his honour. Bear in mind that you cannot pay less than £5 for your tickets alone, to say nothing of coming to Bayreuth and staying there. Many of these people may have had the vaguest idea of the difference between a leitmotiv and a Bühnenweihfest-

spiel, may hardly have known who Wagner was. But the fact remains that Wagner somehow impressed himself enough on the world to make people think it worth spending £5 per head and upwards to hear and see his works in the way he thought they should be heard and seen.

We came to the red-brick theatre—the most hideous I ever saw. It is the naked skeleton of a theatre, with all its anatomy—vestibule, auditorium, flies, dressing-rooms — sticking out unashamed, with no attempt to hide or beautify them. It is not built for show. Except at festival-time there is nobody to look at it, and at festival-time everybody is naturally looking at everybody else. And assuredly everybody else was well worth looking at. I suppose it must be rather a perplexing problem how one is to dress for a theatrical performance in the country which begins at four and ends at ten. Wonderful indeed were the solutions of it. The women, for once, were less wonderful than the men. The women merely wore evening-dress, or dinner-dress, with a bonnet, or garden-party dress, or travelling dress, or shirts and bicycle skirts, according as they regarded it as town or country, morning or evening. The English and American men wore the tweeds and serges, straw or felt hats, and yellow boots, which they consider good enough for any occasion abroad.

But the German men! There was just one gentleman in correct frock-coat, light trousers, and tall hat. Another came very near him, but had ap-

parently mistaken the feast-play for a funeral—he was in deepest mourning. Several wore evening-dress, with black ties; one had invented a kind of combination dress-and-frock coat—frock buttoned, dress unbuttoned—which, but for its general grotesqueness, was plainly the very thing for the occasion. But these were hide-bound conventionalists beside the play of fancy which others showed.

Among the dresses, as they say in the Society column, we noticed the following: Correct morning-dress, with a straw hat; correct evening-dress, with shepherd's plaid trousers and brown boots; frock-coat and cricket cap; black morning-coat, Leghorn straw hat and knickerbockers; frock-coat, white waistcoat, and a kind of gilt deer-stalker; frock-coat, sombrero, grey hair down back, and bit of sausage sticking out of mouth; frock-coat, straw hat, duck trousers, no waistcoat, tartan tie, another kind of tartan shirt, and a third kind of tartan cricket-belt; brown knickerbockers, grey flannel shirt, patent-leather shoes, no coat, no waistcoat, no hat.

You will imagine that time passed quickly and enjoyably in the contemplation of this scene. Before I had absorbed the half of it there stepped to the threshold of the theatre half-a-dozen men with brass instruments. A little man in a frock-coat and a bowler ranged himself in front of them. Suddenly he began to wave his arms round his head, and to this conducting they blew the first few notes of "Parsifal." That meant it was to begin in five min-

utes—it is the regular signal at Bayreuth. We tumbled up the bare mountainous stairs into the bare undecorated theatre. It was not more beautiful inside than out. It is a vast sloping wedge, of which the stage is the thin end; the thick end is a row of boxes for royal persons and suchlike; between are the stalls. There is nothing else but stalls—tier on tier of cane-bottomed seats, rising gradually from the stage. Each seat costs £1, and in theory each is as good as each of the others. In practice the back side seats—need I say mine was a back side seat?—are not quite as good for seeing as the front middle seats.

On the other hand, they are probably better for hearing: an enormous orchestra does not combine properly unless you are some distance from it; although at Bayreuth, by a most admirable arrangement, the orchestra is tucked away under the stage, and you cannot see it. Take it altogether, this is the most practical opera-house in the world. It would never do in London—it is not very comfortable, and the difficulties in the way of seeing who is in the house are almost insuperable. But in Germany, where people go to the opera to see and hear operas, it is exactly what you want. Stern, bare, utilitarian, just simply a place to see and hear from. It is exactly what you want.

The lights went out; the rustle of people went out as suddenly; the prelude began. The prelude ended, and the first act began. From the audience there was not a single sound. The youngest Ameri-

can girls tried a whisper or two at first, but even they were awed into silence. There was more than one point where I should like to have laughed; but amid this strained attentive rapture no laugh came. The first act lasted an hour and three-quarters; nobody stirred or made a sound. There was an interval of three-quarters of an hour, and then the second act lasted an hour and a quarter; nobody stirred or made a sound. Then another interval of three-quarters of an hour, and a third act of an hour and a half. Perhaps twenty people—mostly Americans —had gone home; still nobody made a sound. Four hours and a half of solid music, without a tune to hum in the whole of it; 1500 people, a good third of them from the two least-to-be-awed peoples on earth, and not a voice, or a cough, or a banging seat from the lot of them!

What do you make of this, anti-Wagnerian? With Germans you can understand it; they are trained to sit at attention; one German fainted with devotion, which was the only distraction of the day. But English and American men and women don't sit four hours and a half motionless on cane-bottomed seats for the sheer enjoyment of being cramped and uncomfortable. Then why do they it? True, they have got to do it, once they are inside the place; but why do they come? Partly, perhaps, it is because of the delicious holiday setting of the piece. You go out of the dark, reverence-stricken, human-smelling playhouse after the first act to sit in the sun and look away over the broad Bavarian

valleys, with fir-grown ridges between; after the second act to eat your dinner, as the evening cool exudes freshly out of the half-dried woods and corn-fields; at the end to walk home in the mysterious night.

But that cannot be the whole reason of it. It would be too wild to suppose that these people take Wagner as a kind of bitter pill to put an edge on the sweetness of Nature. Fashion may have something to do with it, but most of these people were anything but fashionable. They did not look as if the £10-note it cost them to come had many fellows in their pocket-books. And do you think they would come thus to a Mozart festival, a Gounod festival, even to a composer of the "Washington Post" festival?

Then there must be something in Wagner after all—something that makes its appeal to the plain man as well as to the musician. But you don't want to hear my views on Wagner.

III.

It finished last night; and the time has come for buying mementoes of Wagner. This part of the business especially concerns the Germans. You would imagine, indeed, that anybody who had put through the week at Bayreuth would never need to be reminded of Wagner again as long as he lived. But that is not the German view. The German never quite believes that he has been to a place un-

less he brings away some childish toy with the place's name written on it. His family does not believe he has been there unless he brings home similar toys for them; a "Mitbring"—"with-bring" —is the magnificently simple name for such. You feel somehow that there is no getting away from plain hard duty in a language that uses such direct terms as this.

So the shops are crowded this morning. The bewildered shopkeepers—hardly awakened even yet to the fact that there is once more something doing in Bayreuth — are helplessly protesting in their liquid Bavarian dialect that they haven't got anything that anybody could possibly want to buy, and are then being conducted outside in solemn procession to be convinced by the presence of the article where they put it in the window a week ago. You can buy many kinds of articles in Bayreuth, but they all bear on Wagner. It looks best, think some, to buy an orchestral score; though, to be sure, you can get that just as well anywhere else, and, for my part, I prefer to pretend that I've got it already. Many buy photographs of the artists—those solid German artists—or of the stage-scenery, or of the outside of the theatre, or of Bayreuth in general, or else imaginative pictures of Rhine maidens as they would be if the law did not compel them to appear in clothes.

But all these are a little commonplace. How much better to get a meerschaum cigar-holder carved into a head of Wagner—the place where

the cigar comes giving him the appearance of wearing a tall hat such as niggers sport on the sands. Or how would you like a two-shilling model of the Holy Grail? Or a one-and-sixpenny bust of Wagner with a red face and black and white clothes? Or a Wagner cigarette-case, or a Wagner pocket-book, or a Wagner purse? There are little phrases out of "Parsifal" neatly scored on each. Or, better still, why not a "Nibelungen-Ring" set of liqueur glasses, with a leitmotiv from each of the four dramas neatly done in gold round the glass?

Yes; it has come to an end, and what has it amounted to? We have had a masterly performance each day—so the local newspapers assure us, and they have had experience. For myself, I have enjoyed it prodigiously. I have always considered Wagner the musician of all others for the plain man. He appears to have nothing to do with counterpoint and such complications. He appears to me to have composed his music on the basis of a scale of his own, floating about somehow in his head—a scale with intervals quite different from those of the ordinary scale; the melodies seem to go along and close quite on different principles from anybody else's, and yet one note seems to follow another as inevitably as those of Mozart himself. Perhaps I am talking nonsense. But I am quite free to admit for myself that Wagner's music makes me laugh and cry, and sends shivers down my back, and turns me hot and cold, and ready to jump up and scream with excitement. And then another point in which

Wagner appears made for the man without musical cultivation is that he always keeps his music hand in hand with the drama, so that the interest of one helps out the other. "The Ring of the Nibelung" is surely a most noble work. With all its grotesqueness, it is so large—it took years and years to compose, and if you began playing it through after an early breakfast you would hardly get it done by bed-time; yet it is all in one piece—it is so lofty, so much on the grand scale, even where it fails, so thrillingly romantic, so poignantly tragic—I defy any simple-minded person to hear its four parts through on successive days and not be sorry at the end that it was over.

Moreover, when the music is dull—and much of it appears to me mere endless repetition of meaningless phrases—and when the action is dull—certainly some of the gods and goddesses are a little prolix—why, there still remains the scenery. Wagner, worthy soul, was happily lacking in a sense of humour; his idea of fun was to bring on a hunchback to be kicked. He was a very literal-minded man. Everything that happened in his operas had to happen on the stage, so that the people could see it; and Wagner wrote down careful directions to that effect in the score. Consequently you get in Wagner the most colossal and difficult stage-effects imaginable, and it is always a joy to sit and watch how they will be tackled. Three mermaids swimming about in the Rhine is not the easiest thing to put on the stage without being ridiculous; nor yet

are gods walking over a rainbow into Valhalla; nor yet an ex-goddess on horseback galloping into a blazing funeral pyre. They must all be tackled if you are to give Wagner as he wanted himself given —though the two last are more or less funked at Bayreuth. Then, on one occasion, Parsifal waves a spear—for Wagnerian characters never venture out without a spear—and a whole magic castle comes down about his ears; in the "Ring" there is a very similar scene with the added complication that the castle is on fire. Than this last I never saw any stage-effect more wonderful: it was so realistic that you shuddered as the blazing roof crashed down within a foot of the chorus's heads, and marvelled that it did not set the whole theatre ablaze.

How can Wagner be dull with things constantly going on like that? And when the music palls and the drama stands still and the scenery is doing nothing — why, you can always amuse yourself watching the animals. For whenever an animal appeared to Wagner germane to his story, that also had to be brought on to the stage. In "The Ring of the Nibelung" there are thus introduced a dragon, a snake, a live bear, a dead ditto, a goat (with charge), a horse, a couple of ravens, and a bird of unspecified breed described as a wood bird. Each of these affords perpetual entertainment while it is on the stage. The Bayreuth dragon, for example—the only one of the beasts that has a singing part—is a triumph. It is as thick as three fat men, and larger than a tramcar, yet it moves all over in

the most convincing way. It has a snub nose, a sloping forehead, and four huge canine teeth, and fire comes out of its mouth; in face it is wonderfully like a bull-dog smoking a cigar. The wood bird, again, is very engaging. instead of flying it runs along a wire, sometimes sticking for a moment, exactly like a spider.

But Brünnhilde's horse is the masterpiece—in fact, it is my favourite character in all Wagner. It is real, whereas all the others are imitations. And what a noble animal! He comes on first while the goat is performing, and what heroic self-command he must exert not to shy at it! When Siegfried parts from Brünnhilde he has to poke his head on from the wings, having apparently been hobbled for the night in Brünnhilde's bedroom: how ostentatiously and jaw-breakingly he yawned through that great love duet! No opera could be dull while that horse was on the stage: you are always wondering whether he won't do something not in his part—neigh, or kick Siegfried, or jump over the footlights on to Herr Richter, or something equally indecorous. He never does; but there is always the excitement of anticipation.

On the whole, then, we might pronounce Bayreuth most enjoyable. But there is one blot on it that spoils all, and that—I grieve to write it—is my superior, intellectual, cultured countrymen. The German I do not object to; he goes to Bayreuth because Wagner told him to; when he comes out of the theatre he says, "Wunderschön," and there is

an end of it; he then drinks beer and talks of something else. But the English girl—she is generally unmarried, and runs from twenty-five to thirty-five—with her accurate knowledge, and her impassive ways, and her prim pale face, and that thin, slow, unmodulated, very-high-in-the-head voice! You know the voice; it is not a chest voice, nor even a head voice; it is a kind of brain voice, an excellent voice to sneer in. And how she sneers! She goes to the theatre and comes out and says, "I wonder why Vogl can't attack his notes cleanly," and "Such a pity they made such a muddle of the 'Feuerzauber.'" When she recognises a motiv she labels it with its name in an audible whisper. She knows all the scenes by their Christian names, so to speak, and talks of "the Ritt" as if she went out shopping to it. She never laughs—only gives a sort of cough half disdain, half pity. I had met some like this, but I did not know there were so many in the world as I saw last week in Bayreuth.

I don't like her at all, and I wonder why she comes. She doesn't look as if she enjoyed it, but perhaps she does, in a way, after all. It is a place where she can bask in her own culture. The truth is that, except to her, Bayreuth is not a place of pilgrimage at all, but only a place of rational enjoyment after a person's own fashion. The German goes there as he goes to church—it is his duty. The Frenchman goes to make epigrams, to twist his fingers, and say, "Comme ça." The American takes it in with his Job-shaming patience as an institu-

tion of Europe. The Englishman mostly goes to take the English girl. To the cultured English girl alone is Bayreuth a high and holy sanctuary,—it is the mirror of her own superiority.

IN SEARCH OF A FAMINE.[1]

I.

I knew there must be a famine, because the 'Freeman's Journal' said so; but for the life of me I could not detect it.

I had always pictured Western Ireland, and especially the county Mayo, and more especially the coastwise districts of that same, as an aching desolation and destitution. I thought the country was a turn-and-turn of rolling screes and sopping bog. A guide-book I had picked up in the Shelbourne at breakfast warned me that the sleeping accommodation at Killala, whither I was tending, was little or none. I conceived myself shivering in a wet rug on a wet mud floor, snuffed at by curious pigs, roosted upon by callous fowls. I thought regretfully of the warm soft sand of African deserts.

And behold, the country through which I approached starving Killala was singularly like certain grazing districts of England, only more beautiful. England is green after any other country; Ireland was greener with a tenderer and sprightlier verdure. Stones there were a many in a few fields, and the 4-foot walls of all showed how many there

[1] Daily Mail, May 1898.

had been before the land was cleared. Bog there was also, luridly purple beside the shining pastures, with black water in steep-cut trenches, and stacks of brown peats beside them. But you couldn't believe that this country was very hungry.

There were cattle upon a thousand hills—milch cows, young steers and heifers; here were ewes, and the lambs could hardly suck them for the hanging mantles of wool; naked pink pigs gleamed along the hedgerows; ducks and geese waddled at the head of their families by every blue stream and black lough; the white tree-girdled cottages were all a-cluck with laying hens. Where was the famine? It might be lurking somewhere; but a country so alive with beasts could not look starving if it tried.

Out of the window at Ballina—the last station before the end of the line—I saw a young priest riding as smart a black cob as you ever saw at Tattersall's, three young ladies on bicycles, and a family in a four-wheeled dog-cart. Thank heaven, everybody wasn't destitute. And right on to Killala, where there suddenly broke into view a sea as blue as an Academy picture, the landscape was still close, rich turf, almost exasperatingly succulent. At Killala there did, indeed, show a momentary promise. The platform was empty but for one porter and a man with a long colourless beard, who might have been posing as the only inhabitant left. But as he took my bag he disclosed the fact that there

was indeed an hotel where a traveller could get a bed.

"If yer honour should be wanting to go to Ballycashtle now, to-morrow," he began, "I have a cyar, sorr." It revived one's confidence in the world somehow to find that Irish peasants really do say "cyar, sorr"; but when he went on to deplore the depopulation of the country, I began to come back to the interest of my errand. I was on its track already. "How long has that been going on?" I asked eagerly. "'Tis thirrty years now, sorr," he replied. And that was all the famine intelligence I got out of him.

Nobody could call Killala a stately city—city, mark you; at any rate, it has a bishop, though only 500 inhabitants—nor even a strikingly clean one; but Killala also hardly wore the look of starvation. The hotel was the best parlour and best bedroom of one of the most flourishing shopkeepers, so it evidently wasn't fair to judge by that. But the smaller houses, though only two rooms, and not wonderfully well kept, were as commodious and as well furnished with pots and pans and crockery as the ordinary English labourer's. Most of them were weak in the doors and windows, and there was usually grass growing on the thatch; but as it would be perfectly easy to clear it off in a morning, and nobody seemed to have any very pressing work to do, I imagine they prefer their thatches so.

I went out for a short walk to reconnoitre the famine. Everywhere I found the same enchanting

beauty of country, the same abundance of stock, the same shiftless, apparently contented poverty, but no token of starvation. The land rose and dipped now into a family of little round knolls, now into a wide sweep of valley climbing gently to a round homely blue mountain in the distant twilight. Nothing pretended to be grand, though batches here and there were bleak. The country looked gentle and, above all, fresh and green. The whole world can show nothing like the vivid lustre of Ireland's pastures. Close-cropped, undulating, springy, they are such fields as turn the mind generally towards a good horse.

It is not all fine grass and clover, and the extremity of Mayo is ill-placed for markets; but more than half of the land was such as you would gladly pay £3 or £4 or £5 an acre for near London. Across it tramped peasants, not so stout as ours, and barefooted girls in shawls, to milk the cow as she stood in the pasture. When the face turned towards you out of the shawl you saw carmine cheeks and black eyes that left you blinking, or else skins of peach-blossom and wide, clear grey eyes that filled you with a vague desire to pray. The only thing more beautiful than the Irish land is the Irish women: even when they are old with the premature age of poverty and raggedness, the grace and the wonderful eyes and the courteous, modest liquid speech compel the homage you would not pay to diamonds. And of both men and women you mark that while your apparition plainly consumes them

with wonder and curiosity there is no hint of boorishness—no echo of our own rustic guffaw. The Irish peasant is a natural gentleman. A string of shaggy donkeys came up the road, peats in the panniers, the vision of an angel swinging bare legs from the beast's rump, and guiding him with a little stick, for all the world like an Egyptian fellah. Then another donkey, this time with the panniers half-full of provisions from the shop in Killala, a small boy perched behind, and his mother tramping after. Likely enough the groceries were bought on credit, though they may have been bartered for eggs; at any rate, there they were, going home to be eaten—which is not a sign of starvation. And below, in a field on the skirts of Killala, my eye fell on a large round tent. It looked—but, no, not in famine-time—but, yes, here was the bill of it before my nose on the wall. To-day, at 2.30 and 7.30, Davies's World-renowned Circus!

I went; should I ever not go to a circus? It was aptly pointed out on the posters that Davies's circus does not depend upon paltry items, but that every event is of the highest possible quality. But for the moment we are less concerned with the æsthetic than the economic aspect of Davies's circus. If my counting was right, there attended, exclusive of two boys who crawled in under the tent, 309 persons. With all allowance for those who came in from the country round, 309 is not bad, during a famine, for a population of 500. Of the 309, 57 paid 1s. and

249 6d.; three small girls attended at the expense of the 'Daily Mail.'

The money taken at the door—I hope this is not giving away the Messrs. Davies's professional secrets—would thus work out at £2, 17s. plus £6, 4s. 6d.; total, £9, 1s. 6d.

Now, £9, 1s. 6d. is not a vast sum. And I should be the last creature in the world to regret that every man, woman, and child in Ireland should attend circuses once a week for the whole of their lives. They have little enough to amuse them, I should say. Lord Salisbury has recommended the diversion; and it was an interesting testimonial to the wisdom of his famous indiscretion that, while the nephew is labouring at Local Government, Killala went with the uncle. Circus by all means; only when a district insisted on as especially famine-stricken can spare £9 for a circus—well, things can't be so very deadly, can they? Of course there was plenty of room left in the neighbourhood for starving people who didn't go. But the ratepayers went, and it has been a familiar cry at Westminster that the ratepayers are only a few shillings better than the paupers, and that therefore it is brutal tyranny to make them pay a quarter of the relief works. The money paid at the door of the circus means a union's share of a week's relief works for 120 people. It is compatible enough with poverty, but hardly with downright dearth.

On the evidence of the world-famous circus, as well as the general look of things, Killala seemed

to be drawn blank. I must search for the famine a little farther on.

II.

The long white road ahead, and the rolling green on either hand, the sun on your cheek, and the Atlantic salt on your lips, and a big bay mare in the car; in such a country on such a day, how good it was to be alive! Up and down the rough but hard-metalled road we swung, then suddenly came down at the head of a half-mile stretch of firm sand; beyond it a bay of intense turquoise; up the leftward cliffs a climbing village; behind us, appearing in the corner under a park of turf and trees, a little grey stone chapel.

"The praste will be in the churrch, sorr," said the driver. The door was open, and you could see kneeling figures in the dusk. Outside, also, in the little green yard, a dozen men knelt reverently as the bell tinkled within.

It was a saint's day—I forget the name, but it turned out to be the Anglican Ascension Day—and by consequence a holiday. All along the road, afoot or in cars, we had seen passing the population—the men in decent black, the women in clean gowns and shawls. Decidedly the famine had no luck. The first day I tumbled on the circus; to-day, quite unintentionally, I had come on Rathlathan, recommended as the most starving village of starving Mayo, just on the day to see its population in their best clothes.

When the people came filing out of church, I give you my word it might have been one of the quietest English watering-places in the season. I know little of dress fabrics, but the women appeared far better dressed than I ever saw English peasants' wives and daughters. Not a man but had his decent black coat. I thought they must surely be visitors; but no visitors—the loss is theirs, as well as the village's—ever come to Rathlathan. Its sons and daughters were certainly the best dressed starvelings I ever saw.

The priest had blessed the last of the congregation, and came out in his vestments—grey-haired, with a round face, short nose, twinkling black eyes rather close together, and a beard mown rather than shaved. He spoke with the brogue of the country, a little slow and indistinct, like a recluse with few opportunities of keeping his tongue oiled for conversation. But he comprehended my business with ready courtesy, and took me to his house and gave me biscuit and wine, and showed me, by way of beginning, the books that set forth his relation with the Dublin Mansion House Fund.

There were only ten men receiving relief in the whole parish; but then, he explained, his parish and the next were furnishing a couple of hundred to the government relief works across the bay, where a pier was being built for fishing-boats. The ten—we may assume that only ten needed this relief, since the fund had supplied plenty of money for Rathlathan—were all employed on draining their

own land, and received 6s. a week. They only work five days weekly; what hours, opinion seems to differ, some saying eight to two, others eight to five. But the curious and very instructively Irish point that emerged from the record was that the men on the relief works do not work themselves at all. In the table headed "Remarks" you saw "Son Michael to work," "Son Pat to work," "Grandson Martin to work"—somebody else to work for him against every name. The work supposed, not so much to be publicly useful—it is hardly public works, paying a man for improving his own land—as to constitute a test of destitution; unless a man be really starving, it is urged, he will not work long hours for 1s. a day. Only here it turned out that what really happens is that somebody else works for him at his own land five days for 6s. a week! I know plenty of English labourers, not starving, who would be very willing to undergo the same test on the same terms.

His reverence said his flock was poor—poor always, especially poor in winter, and poorer than ever now, since the potato crop failed last year, and since now, at the pinching time, every kind of breadstuff had gone up. But for that they might have pulled through; but the wholly accidental blow of the rise in corn on the top of the failure of potatoes was too much for them. Their holdings are very small—four acres is a large one, and some are as little as one or only half an acre. For Rathlathan, you see, ekes out its holdings by fishing—a

miserable trade enough at most times, and especially unproductive between Christmas and mid-May. All that time, said the priest, his flock had made nothing off either sea or land. The relief just kept them alive on Indian-meal porridge, and that was all. For next crop almost everybody had had seed potatoes, most oats, and some ryegrass; but that will not tell before next year.

So said the priest. Thereon, recalling the complaints that Mr. Gerald Balfour has not done enough, I asked him whether, with the existing relief, his people could carry on till the opening of August, when they begin to dig the new potato crop. And his reply was not ambiguous. "Yes," he said; "if the present relief continues they'll pull through."

The priest saying that, I take it as certain; for he was at pains, not unnaturally, to put the poverty of his people at its very poorest. And, indeed, it was plain enough that, if not starving, a fair proportion of the people of Rathlathan were miserably indigent —more indigent than anybody willing to work ought to be allowed to be. The village, as I said, climbs up a hill. It has no streets, unless you call such one row of stones and ruts, up and down which a man of nerve could drive a sure-footed horse. For the rest, you can go from hut to hut up precipices of scaling stones with little muddy waterfalls trickling down over them.

We went into a hut. The clean smell of peat struck gratefully on the nose, and the cottage ap-

peared through a veil of blue smoke. The floor was flagstones, uneven and broken, at one end disappearing altogether in a litter of manure; half of it was the bed of the cow, now at pasture, and in the other, within a flagstone sty, reclined the sow and her nine infants. At the other end peat glowed on the hearth; at one side of it, in a corner, was a wooden bed, with a wooden canopy over it; by that a dresser with crockery and cooking pots; by the hearth a couple of stools,—and that was all the furniture. In the middle of the room a dozen fowls squabbled over what looked like a handful of meal. "That," said the priest grimly, "is the cleanest cottage ye'll see for a long while."

The others to my eyes were not appreciably dirtier, but they were no cleaner either. As we stumbled and slid from one to another I observed how the good Father ensured that the poverty of his flock should lose nothing by demonstration. As thus:—

Priest (*entering*). Who lives here?

Inmate. Good marning to yer reverence; good marning to ye, Father Hugh.

Priest. Who lives here?

Inmate. Pat O'Connor, yer reverence.

Priest. Are ye on the relief works now? (*Silence.*) Yes: ye are. How long do ye work? (*Silence; then in an audible aside:*) Ah, he's dazed with trouble. What time do ye go to work?

Inmate. Eight o'clock, yer reverence.

Priest. Right; eight o'clock. And when do ye lave off? (*Silence.*) When do ye lave off, I say? Foi———

Inmate (*hastily*). Foive, yer reverence.

Priest. Yes, foive; it's too long.

Or else a dialogue like this:—

Peasant. Can ye tell me now, yer reverence, why they won't take me on for the relafe?

Priest. How many of a family have ye?

Peasant. Four.

Priest. Four children?

Peasant. No; one child and my mother and myself and my wife.

Priest. Have ye a cow now?

Peasant. Yes, yer reverence; an old cow, maybe twelve or thirteen years old.

Priest. Ah, then, it's that old cow has done ye. No; I can't help ye. God knows how ye'll do for a living.

Thus was I dialogued at by the space of half an hour or more. But through all the hints and asides and by-play I observed one or two facts. First, I saw not a single cottage without stock of some sort or other; not one without poultry, not one without a pig, not very many without presumptive evidence of a cow in the shape of its bed, or, more conclusive, its calf. Secondly, they ostentatiously displayed the poverty of their outer rooms, but drew no attention to their inner, in which they are wont to keep their best clothes and the like.

Thirdly, with the exception of a few men who had gone out to fish, not a single man in the village was working.

As we went down again to the bay we met the fishermen coming up. "What fish did ye catch?" asked Father Hugh. "None, your reverence," came the glib reply. The speaker passed up; just behind him followed a couple of men, of whom the second bore two large shining fish in his hands; after them came a donkey whose panniers looked as if they contained more.

That struck me as very like Rathlathan—and presumably like the alleged famine as a whole. The truth is bad enough. But the natural sympathy for bad luck and indigence is too likely to be forfeited by mendicancy and exaggeration.

III.

"Now, did ye expect to find a place like this in Foxford?" asked the Mother Superior.

She sat among rolls of tweed and flannel in the little office of the factory. She was very short and small, the Reverend Mother, and I could hardly hear her voice for the clatter of the looms. But in her face sat capacity, as well as sweetness, and it had only needed the most casual glance at the institution of which she is head to teach me that here was one whose words on the problem of Western Ireland should not be allowed to fall to the ground.

Before the Sisters of Charity set up their convent, seven years ago, the Foxford district was among

the most miserable in Ireland. Here the soil really is wretched beyond exaggeration—stony, boggy, light, poor, hopeless. It is subdivided into plots seldom larger than four acres, often miserably less, and even without potato failures it was difficult enough to keep soul and body together on it. The men looked east for their bread—working in England at hay and corn harvests to make the rent. The girls looked west to the States, and the driblets of wages they sent home were often the only barrier between their parents and starvation. You would have said there was nothing for such a place but the most sweeping of remedies—abolition of rent, wholesale enlistment, wholesale emigration.

Now the first thing that greets you is the clash and rattle of the wool factory. While members of Parliament have been sobbing and blustering about Ireland's throttled industries, women have set to work to restore them. They buy the peasant's wool at the door—naturally it is a far better market than he could find elsewhere in out-of-the-world Connaught—and teach his sons and daughters to weave it. At the looms I saw only boys and girls, not one grown person except the Sister—elderly, quiet, spectacled, yet with a purely Irish smile lurking somewhere round her lips—who is the manager of the factory. To the young people the convent was giving the best and the most needful of all good gifts—a trade.

In another room a dozen girls were knitting stockings—by machine, for the Sisters of Charity

are also women of business. Charity is not so very rare in this world, but sensible charity is rare enough to command enthusiasm wherever you may meet it.

From the knitting I went to the school—such a schoolroom as made you long to be young again, all glass and light, and air, and outside the green sunshiny hills and the rushing torrent of the river Moy. That river, I should have told you, turns every wheel in the factory; and observe once more that, while men were crying out upon the waste of Mayo's splendid water-power, women turned to and made use of it.

The next thing was the dairy, then the kitchen, then the laundry. All these are departments of instruction. The dairy, of course, buys its milk in the districts; so that here, again, the Sisters both furnish a market and teach a trade. Likewise there is a poultry-rearing school, and I was rejoiced to find the Reverend Mother agree that for an all-round hardy fowl there is nothing like the Plymouth Rock. From the villages in the convent's sphere of influence—it extends five miles every way, which makes nearly 100 square miles in all—the Sisters collect and sell eggs; they go to Dublin, and the peasantry get the full price for them, only deducting carriage. That, you will see, they could not possibly hope to get anywhere else.

But the factory, and the school, and the dairy class, and the laundry class, and all the others, are only the beginning of the Sisters' work. For five

miles on every side they take the place of landlord and poor-law guardians, and sanitary board, and school board, and charity organisation society, and every other function that is likely to do their people good. The landlord lives away in England; it is the Sisters who institute poultry shows and stimulate vegetable-growing, and teach the value of a nursing-crop sown with their oats. It is they who have lured the peasants to clear out the century-old manure-pits, which lay breeding disease at the door of every hut, and to put their refuse on the land instead. They have given doors that will keep air out and windows that will let air in. They have even succeeded here and there in establishing the pig outside the house, instead of in—just as easy, and healthier for pig and people, after once the Irishman sees a reason to do it.

"We do it," says the Reverend Mother, with her unspeakably sweet and humorous smile, "by prizes. When friends send us seeds, the people all want to be in at the divide, as they call it. But we only give them to those who have cleared away their manure-pits, and they come to know it. Then we give them new doors and windows for prizes if they keep their cabins clean. I remember in 1890, at the convent where I then was, we had a lot of money sent us to distribute; and it demoralised the people so dreadfully, I made up my mind they ought never to be given anything for nothing again."

In their own district the management of the relief-

works has been almost entirely undertaken by the Sisters. When I drove out with the steward of the convent's good works, or whatever I should call the man who is the Superior's representative in managing the people, I saw the entirely wise and practical form which the relief had taken. Off the main road, again and again, I saw new roads running to where you could see thatches rising over the confused boulders. All these are new made this year, and all lead to villages where before nothing on wheels could ever come. Where before a donkey with panniers could hardly go, you could now, with care, drive a coach and four. Twenty-three such roads in all have been blasted and metalled and rolled by the people they are to bring into living touch with the outside world.

We landed in one of the poorest villages—Kilmore was its name. The land was miserable and the holdings small; but, by comparison, the place was clean and well kept. Here you saw a pink new door, there a large window with a sash. One house had a new chimney, another a newly-repaired roof.

But there was a reverse side to it all. The moment we set foot in the village the inhabitants all crowded up to beg for more. It was painfully evident that Irish mendicancy grows by feeding. "Now, Mr. M'Carthy, when are ye going to bring us a new dure? Look at it, now." "Mr. M'Carthy, could ye not lend me a wheel-barrow? I've cleared my manure-pit, and I want to make a little grass-

plot." "Mr. M'Carthy, I got no oats at the divide, only ryegrass; could ye not let me have some oats? I'm an old woman, all alone; who's going to help me?"

The more they had, the more they wanted. With them it was not relief from hunger—that they had already; it was anything they could get. As usual, not a man in the village was at work; they were just smoking. The climax came with the most prosperous inhabitant of the village. He had a cow and calf, pig, ducks, fowls, and a small garden; he was a young, able-bodied man, and about to leave to work in England. But he begged most sturdily for a gate for his garden. It was walled, like all gardens there, with stones, which are only too abundant. But he complained that the donkeys pushed the wall down.

"Then why don't you build it stronger?" I asked; "there are lots of stones."

"Then how will I get through to it myself?"

"Make a stile to get over."

"No; Mr. M'Carthy, ye must send me a gate before I go to England, and a man to put it up."

In two hours he could have made himself a perfectly good wall and stile. But he preferred to beg for a gate and a man to put it up.

I asked the steward why the old woman, who was quite alone, and could not possibly be expected to keep herself except by begging, did not go into the workhouse. "Ah," he said, "they find it very difficult to go into the workhouse."

So do better men and women in my country, I told him. If you are to have, and pay for, workhouses at all, this woman was plainly a case for one. Only to the Irish mind it is quite a sufficient answer that "they find it very difficult." They mustn't be asked to do anything they find difficult.

IV.

I didn't find it. To be sure, I only visited a small corner of the counties where it is supposed to be. But as that corner was the one whence the loudest cries of distress had come, I think we may assume that there is no famine in Ireland at all. There is considerable distress; but it has been considerably exaggerated, partly for political purposes, partly from Celtic hysteria; and the measures taken to relieve this season's exceptional poverty are, and will be, adequate.

In saying this I do not mean that the conditions of life among the Mayo peasantry are such as they should be. They are obviously not. When you find a population in the condition, and content with the condition, of outside paupers, it is plain that there is something very wrong somewhere. Probably the blame lies pretty equally on everybody concerned. I do not wish to alarm anybody by anarchistic opinions; but I think a landlord who draws rent from the land and makes it no return, in the shape of residence and intelligent supervision of his tenants, is little better than a robber. I think

a political leader who discourages his followers from self-help, or from making an honest living as soldiers or constables, is little better than a traitor to them. And I think a peasant who whines for charity with his hands in his pockets and a pipe in his mouth is little better than a criminal.

Of course, you blame the peasant least. The rent and the subdivision of the land are a terrible handicap on his industry; he has neither the knowledge nor the capital to substitute other industries for his primitive tillage; his ignorance puts him in the hands of leaders who hardly seem to go the directest way to give him practical and permanent help; he himself is dazed and sodden by many generations of hopeless poverty. And then he is Celt. You do not find him at work; he says there is nothing to do. Give an Englishman or a Scotsman four acres to himself, and see if he finds nothing to do.

However, I am not here to write essays on Irish land, or Irish politics, or the Irish character: the question for the moment is the distress and the relief. But for the exceptional help rendered I think there would have been real starvation. But in saying that the present relief, if continued, is adequate, I do not go at all on my own observation only. I take the priest of Rathlathan, who says his people will pull through till the new potato crop is dug; I take the Sisters of Foxford, who have surmounted the danger of present hunger, and are working on, most laudably, with their efforts for

permanent amelioration. I take the opinion of a minister of religion, not Catholic who, while fully alive to the hardships of his flock, told me plainly: "There's nothing that you could call famine; there does be great poverty, but there does be exaggeration."

These being the opinions of people all naturally tending to overstate rather than understate the necessities of the people, we may take it for certain that this year's crisis is tided over. I shall not trouble you, therefore, with the lengthy criticisms I heard about the manner of distributing relief, though these might be borne in mind in view of another bad potato crop. It was said, and I should say plausibly, that it is a great mistake to intrust relief works either to boards of guardians or any other local agency. You will never get justice done thus, I was told, not once nor twice, since everybody has favourites; the really needy are left out, and some are taken on who could struggle along without. To my mind the Irish peasant appeared to look on relief works less as a last defence against starvation than as a natural right of man—which they obviously ought not to be. And one of my informants—a Catholic and a Nationalist all right—took my breath away by regretting the days when such public doles had been superintended by the R.E. or the police.

Of course the country was vocal with criticisms about the works selected for public employment. Some of these—the pier for fishing-boats opposite

Rathlathan or the roads to the sequestered villages about Foxford—were of plain and urgent public utility. On the other hand, some people complained that work was put on to entirely useless accommodation roads, and held it would have been far better to pay 3s. a week instead of 6s. and let men work on their own holdings. Very likely it would; only I doubt whether they would work, and, moreover, such employment would be useless unless accompanied by some independent and trustworthy criterion of destitution. It appears essential that public employment ought only to be given in the last resort; the Mayo peasantry are quite pauperised enough already.

One suggestion favoured a light railway from Killala to Ballycastle, if not along the whole of the northern Mayo coast up to Belmullet. That, no doubt, would be an ideal public employment, and would bring some of the most beautiful scenery in the world into touch with such tourists as are neither very leisured nor very moneyed. There is, also, at least one flagstone quarry which could be profitably worked with the aid of such a line, and it would, of course, open up the country generally. I am afraid there is only the poorest chance of such a railway making its expenses for a very long time. But as an investment in national prosperity it should bring in its return from the first.

These are points which might come useful in the event of another shortage; but, of course, any remedy, to be practical, ought to aim at prevention.

Of such there are dozens in the air, from land nationalisation downwards. It might be doubted whether the Irish peasant is the ideal small proprietor, but in any case we will leave that question for politicians. In the meantime, two immediate reforms are being pursued: the obliteration of potato disease by chemicals, and the cultivation of many crops instead of one.

The sprayer was first used, I believe, in France against phylloxera in vineyards. Some years ago it was introduced into the West of Ireland. It is an easily handled machine, which distributes over a crop of potatoes a solution of blue-stone (sulphate of copper). The first landlord who introduced it in the Ballina district grew two parallel patches; one he sprayed and the other he neglected, and he encouraged his tenants and poor neighbours to watch the result. The one gave a good and healthy crop; the other was destroyed by blight.

Need it be said that the peasantry at first regarded the sprayer with profound distrust and aversion? But the present stress has thrown everybody back on it; you will find everybody now most anxious to use the sprayer, and most confident as to its ability to stamp out blight utterly in four years. There is much reason to believe this true.

Now a sprayer costs about 25s., and the ordinary Irish small-holder is not in a position to buy one. Several might combine; but, of course, the sulphate of copper has to be applied in dry weather, lest it be unprofitably washed off again. There are not too

many dry days a season in county Mayo, and that puts a limit on the common ownership of sprayers. The Mansion House Fund has given a certain number; in theory these are to be used only for the potatoes presented by the fund, but to expect that is hardly to allow for human nature. All authorities agree that more sprayers are wanted, and I can hardly conceive a fitter form for charity to take.

As for diversity of crops, a good deal has been done by the Dublin Fund, by private friends of the Foxford Convent, and similar agencies. The peasantry eat little oatmeal, and depend, beyond potatoes, mainly on Indian meal imported from America; at present they are rewarded for this by having to pay prices almost doubled. Now most of the holders have received presents of seed oats, rye, ryegrass, and—at anyrate in the Foxford sphere—vegetable seeds. The use of oatmeal would be a great step in advance; the growth of vegetables might become almost as useful a stand-by as poultry-keeping, which, at the rate of 5s. per 100 eggs bartered for food in the shops, is keeping many a peasant's home somehow going at this moment.

But when all is said and done, you still have the Irish peasant to deal with—the most adorable and the most impossible person in the world. You can give him a sprayer, but will he use it? You can give him seed, but will he grow it? And if he does, won't he do his very utmost to pretend that he is just as badly off as ever? You would say that he

likes to be poor; he likes to be a beggar; he prefers being dirty, and keeps the pig in the house at the imminent risk of his health. The truth is that he is a child, and he cannot do without a parent or guardian. He wants a guardian who understands him, who will not be sternly unsympathetic, as an Englishman would usually be, nor yet softly indulgent, as an Irishman of his own class would be. When you see such tutelage existing—as at Foxford, though with perhaps an inclination to cockering—you see that it is just possible, with toil and curses, to do something with the Irish after all. The natural person to have taken him in hand was his landlord. Only, where is he? In his absence comes the member of Parliament, and then begins the Irish question.

"DURING HER MAJESTY'S PLEASURE."[1]

I.

"There isn't a strait-jacket in the place, nor a padded room," said the superintendent. I gave a gasp of amazement. Six or seven hundred criminal lunatics, and not a strait-jacket among them! But it was I who was absurd. I had a foolish idea that a lunatic is always in a state of acute mania—always screaming and shaking bars. As a matter of fact, I heard not a single scream in Broadmoor. Madness or sanity, as the superintendent said, is a question of degree. It may be impossible to treat a man as sane, and yet equally impossible for a casual acquaintance to say that he is mad.

All the restraint at Broadmoor is exerted by hand, by human, not mechanical, power. It is a most rigid rule that no attendant may lay single hands even on the most violent patient; he must blow his whistle for aid. When three or more men approach him, even a maniac is usually sane enough not to struggle. But if he does, then he has overwhelming force against him, and is the less likely to be hurt.

That was the first misapprehension bowled over by a visit to Broadmoor; there were others to fol-

[1] Daily Mail, November 1897.

low. I was taken out on to the terraced garden; the asylum stands on a hill, and if the high red walls give the first impression of a prison, the noble prospect over miles of fir-clothed hill, the gauzy curtain of distant mist, the clearer blue sky, and the clearer air that you only find in hilly, sandy, heather-and-fir-tree country,—these are the next best thing to freedom. The tiers of garden were marked out into little plots; each, I heard with new amazement, is the private garden of an inmate. It is not the best time of year to see gardens, but they were full of strawberry plants, carnations, winter vegetables, even fruit-trees. I was not surprised to hear that the small cultivators grow most prodigious crops to the square yard. A man must needs love his garden when it is all he has in the world.

But I was once more surprised to hear that they buy their own manure. An inmate who works—on his garden, at tailoring, boot-making, mattress-making—gets one-eighth of the product of his labour for himself, and, within obvious limits, he can do what he likes with it. If he has a private income he can get a proportion of it to spend. He can order his own clothes from the village tailor; he can order a brace of birds for his dinner; he can send presents to his friends. Only the most precious, and surely the most pathetic, present of all, is the basket of strawberries or box of pears, grown on his own plot by his own labour, that a working man will send somewhere out into the world to his wife.

When I came to see the inmates I perceived that Broadmoor is not a prison. It is a huge mental hospital, and the principal thing used in it is healthy occupation. You can gauge a man's mental health almost exactly by the degree in which he notices his fellows. A man who is very ill stands and walks among his companions all day; he sees them and hears them with eye and ear. But in his mind he is quite alone, a hermit dwelling with his own delusions. When a man is better he will make acquaintances and friends; he will begin to interest himself in his work or his play. And the more he interests himself in things not himself, the better he becomes.

As this was expounded to me we passed by the lawn-tennis court. Two gentlemen who had murdered were playing two gentlemen who had attempted murder. Inside the block where these live tea was being got ready—not at one long table, but at many short ones; the sun slanted on to the grained wood-work, and the fire crackled cheerily. We passed the row of little bedrooms; you cannot call them cells, for the inmates use them only at night: a glazed slit by the door, through which the attendant on night duty can flash his lantern on to the pillow, is the only suggestion of captivity. One room was being put in order—not by the owner, but by a poorer patient, his servant. Then we came into the day-room; it looked exceedingly like the smoking-room of an unpretentious but comfortable hotel. Men lounged about on benches in the sun, or in

armchairs before the fire. Most of these were grey-bearded; the younger men were out of doors, but exercise, like work, is recommended by persuasion rather than enforced.

Here were books and newspapers in abundance—chess, draughts, cards, and a billiard-table. Here was a quiet, trim, scholarly-looking man who had pushed his wife over a cliff; there a rougher, ragged-bearded elder who had throttled his senior partner; there, reading the 'Daily Mail,' a mild-eyed visionary whose mission in life is to kill a royal person. They exchanged courteous "Good afternoons" with the doctor; of the stranger they took no more heed than one would of a visitor in a club. And the couple of dark-blue attendants, standing quiet, decorous, tactful, but vigilant in the midst of a dozen madmen, might almost have been club servants.

But there is another side to Broadmoor. These were the first-class patients in both senses—the best mentally and socially. In another block we come into a long passage which opened through barred windows on to a courtyard. It was full of men and keepers—the men in white trousers and long grey sleeveless cloaks. Some walked swiftly to and fro, as if bent on important business; others stood stock-still, as if they had forgotten their own existence; all alike looked straight out of their eyes, yet seemed to see no one and nothing. Only one man noticed the doctors and me: he came up and looked me in the face with unwinking eyes, and began to

speak. He spoke on and on, without pause and without modulation; his speech was educated; he spoke of volts and elliptical orbits, and of mysterious beings from Camden, New Jersey, who had murdered his father with Röntgen rays. He was abreast of every movement in physical science up to yesterday's 'Times,' and he was there from a county asylum for killing the doctor with a stone in a pocket-handkerchief.

From the next court a crowd swarmed up at the view of a strange face like moths round a lamp. Trembling figures handed up letters on to the sill for approval—pitiful little scrawls on blue paper addressed to the Queen, to judges, to the dead, to the Almighty. A score of fixed, unexpressive eyes met mine; a dozen chanting voices rose up together. All spoke with a set, formal utterance, as if of a rehearsed speech. One doomed superintendent, and doctors, and keepers for a set of murderous liars. Another besought them abjectly not to run needles into his eyes. A pair of pale-blue eyes met mine out of the face of a St. John: "My name is T. Perkins, and I have been murdered here, by those that know not what they do, because they have ether in their heads, for Christ's sake." As we turned to go there came a hoarse whisper from a burly black-browed man: "I give you warning, he has condemned us all to death, you and me and all of us; but who he is I am not allowed to say, though there are descendants of his not a hundred miles away." Then he called me back: "Give him the

message, sir, and the token is"—he bared empty gums—"the man has lost his teeth." And the last impression of all was the empty blue eyes of T. Perkins as he followed us from window to window and chanted "Rock of Ages."

The women's side was much quieter—a series of airy rooms with shawled figures knitting round the fire, or white-haired dames dropping pretty little curtseys and promising gifts of kittens. Many had decorated their rooms with little boxes, and flowers, and cards, and pictures on the wall. They have their laundry and their ballroom; nearly all were very peaceful and contented. Yet there were two or three not less pathetic than the men—the new inmate who feigned to be occupied with her bed lest a stranger should notice her, the idiot wench who stood grinning, opening and shutting her hands, the old woman who pleaded hard to be allowed to go to the annual entertainment—"because I've not been now, doctor, for so very many years."

When we came out the sun was sloping down to the fir-woods, and it was getting cold. The men were at work on their gardens; one had had in half a load of smoking manure, and, with a friend, was doing all he knew to get it wheeled out before dark. In the dusk it might have been an allotment field. But my mind dwelt on another glimpse I had had of the bad court from above. One old man, with floating grey beard, was walking about playing on a child's fiddle. Another, very old and with the toothless brainless grin of a baby, was walking swiftly

to and fro making with his hands the motion of a juggler playing with knives. Another—he, too, grey-headed—had put on a red handkerchief like an apron; he stood facing a dead wall, and at regular intervals he gave a little skip like a girl about to slide. A pause, a skip; a pause, a skip—without rest and without variation. And not one out of half a hundred took any heed of any other.

II.

Under a dead sky and a sullen fog, which the thin biting wind could not dispel, Wormwood Scrubs raised its cluster of towers and chimneys with rather a forced and elaborate cheerfulness. The outline is more broken and more decorative than you would expect in a prison; it looks as if it were trying to make-believe that it is something more cheerful. But when you get nearer, walking through the wilderness of football-grounds, which is the only other feature of the landscape, the dominant impression is the lower and outside walls—high, hard, and bare, they make a grim enough contrast to the well-meaning ornament above.

A quarter of a mile from the gate three prisoners were mending the road—one old man and two middle-aged. Their clothes were yellow—the yellow of sackcloth—sprigged with a broad-arrow here and there. Their caps, a kind of cross between a pastry-cook's and a Glengarry, bore a red star. To the three prisoners there were two warders: unostenta-

tiously, but surely, they followed each movement with the pick or shovel, and never seemed to leave a couple of yards between themselves and their men.

The front of the prison is the warders' quarters—pleasant enough, with creepers hanging down over the windows, and children's faces looking through. Here a couple more prisoners were nailing up the creepers, with again a warder's eye on every movement and a second following them at a distance. To get into the prison is only one degree less difficult than to get out. You can ring at the bell easily enough, and the door opens; then you find yourself under an arch, a sort of lodge on one side and a heavily-barred gate blocking it at the inner end. Through the bars there faces you the white chapel, —I have seen many far more forbidding and far less graceful. In front of it another sackcloth figure was weeding the gravel walk, with yet another warder standing over him about six inches distant. At this point you must show your credentials, and thenceforth the little paper from the Home Office will never leave the hand of the officer who takes charge of you. And in the room where you wait awhile, along with plans and regulations on the wall, the eye falls particularly on a list—"Twelve revolvers, three ditto, twelve carbines, ammunition," and the like.

Up to now the impression of Her Majesty's prison is stark enough. But when you find yourself in charge of an officer—spectacled, courteous, intelli-

gent, with nothing of the jailor about him but the chain at his belt, of which the other end is a key —and when you begin to go round department after department, the first impression is washed out almost entirely. You never supposed that a prison would be light and airy, healthy and even cheerful? Well, Wormwood Scrubs is all of these. You go into the first hall, and in a moment you might be in a model lodging-house, only cleaner, better kept, with more industrious inhabitants. It is a long, narrow, lofty court, four-storeyed; glass skylights at the top and feathery iron rails and staircases fill you with a sense of light and air. On this nipping day it is quite warm. On either side rise up the tiers of cells. Warders and prisoners are standing about on the floor working, but here the warders seem less like slave-drivers, as they did outside, than intelligent foremen directing willing hands.

You go into a cell. The prisoner has cleansed it himself, and it is spotless. His floor is like the deck of a man-of-war, and you never saw better polished tin in a tinsmith's than his drinking-cup, washing-bowl, and other vessels. It is not large, but it is lofty for its size; two ventilators let air in and out, and a grating lets in heat. Against the wall leans the man's bed—deal planks raised a few inches above the floor with a rough mattress, perhaps three inches thick, and half-a-dozen blankets. This man is getting to the end of his time. At first there is no mattress, and certainly the planks are hard—only there are many thousands of honest

men in this country who have slept as hard for weeks together, and not near so clean. The other furniture is a small table, coming out bracket-wise from the wall, and a small wooden stool. On a shelf in the corner are the man's books: every prisoner can have out one library book at a time, and devotional books besides; this prisoner is a Jew, and has half-a-dozen, English and Hebrew. And finally—imagine it, O law-abiding citizen!—there is an electric bell. When the criminal wants attention he presses the button; his number appears outside on a bracket, and the warder answers his bell.

As you pass from one part of the prison to another you notice that most of the doors are not solid, but of open iron bars: it maintains the sense of air, and almost gives the lie to the word confinement. You go into the tailoring shop, the boot shop, the smiths' shop, the carpenters' shop. The workshops in Portsmouth Dockyard are not half so comfortable and healthy. Here is the bakery, with convicts kneading dough; here the kitchen, with a law-breaker making a rice-pudding for a sick fellow. Others are at work on navy hammocks, Post Office bags, coal-bags for Her Majesty's fleet. The work of the prison is wholly done inside itself by its own labour; but nothing is sent out except for government departments,—no competition with honest trade. Every man is set to his own trade: if he knows none, he can get the chance to learn.

The chapel is as free and graceful inside as out-

side. The floor of it is sunk; women sit in front, and then behind them is a screen, just so high that the men can see the pulpit without being able to see the women. There is a little font—"We use it sometimes, even here," says my officer, with pride. The chapel is being redecorated—of course by prisoners; they work as cheerfully and as well as everybody else, here. The hospital is like everything else—a model of neatness, cleanliness, and order. There is no suspicion of overcrowding, and the half-dozen men sitting about the ward—nobody is very ill—can hardly have seen such comfortable quarters in their lives before. Only a pace or two down the next corridor a round-faced, open-eyed boy—how came he into the sackcloth livery?—is looking intently through a grating. And inside there paces restlessly and incessantly round and round the cell a man, who seems to have no arms—his jacket comes tight down outside them, and pins them to his side. He has a mild, fair-bearded face, but his gentle eyes look at you without seeing you—he has attempted suicide four times.

There are at work here the two guiding principles of modern criminology—the differentiation of prisoners and the abolition of useless work. As the convicts march round and round the oval exercise-grounds you notice that some bear red stars on cap and tunic: these are first offenders. And the convicts proper—the penal servitude men, that is—exercise by themselves. They alone wear knickerbockers and stockings; they alone are shaved. I

only looked in at their yard for a moment, but there seemed a sullen desperation on their coarse faces that made the short-sentence men look very happy. Another point of difference is that a man is more and more leniently treated as he draws to the end of his time. As for useless work, oakum, for which there is no longer any commercial demand to speak of, has almost entirely disappeared from the Scrubs. At the beginning of a man's term he is put in a cell with a crank to turn; it is like a chaff-cutter, only rather heavier to handle: certainly 10,000 revolutions is a good, though far from excessive, day's work. Short of this, all labour has its definite, comprehensible end. And especially by doing the work of the prison—their own work, that is—are the inmates trained to understand the necessity and dignity of labour and allowed to take an interest in it.

Then, why not all be convicts? To be cockered in a model lodging-house, dry, warm, well-fed, well-trained physically, with a book from the circulating library—the wonder is that our poor do not contrive to spend all their lives in quarters so attractive. The cell for the violent is perfectly comfortable, except that it has no furniture to smash; the dark cell is not dark; the very cat is a puny little whip, and can only be given on a magistrate's order at that. Why not all seek Her Majesty's hospitality at the sign of the Scrubs?

Well—the doors. That is the only thing against it. The whole place is a chess-board of doors—and every door is locked. There is the chain at every

warder's belt, and the clash of the turning key every ten yards of your journey. Bars that you can see through are very well—only when you can't go through it would be almost better not to see. A well-regulated life is the only happy one—only you would sooner regulate it for yourself. The clash of the locks takes root in your ears before you have gone half round. And it is worth going out again out of the warmth and light into the fog and ice-edged wind again for the pleasure of hearing the last clang and clatter behind, and not in front of you.

IN THE COUNTRY OF THE STORM.[1]

For the first moment Ingatestone seemed just like all other Essex stations along the line from London. Coal-trucks on the siding, meadows and trees, a governess-car with a parson in a muffler, and a girl in shirt and sailor hat—it was just the ordinary English country station. And yet there was something queer about it—something that ought not to be. What was it?

There seemed to be a suggestion of November somehow in the midsummer luxuriance. What could it be? The trees! Yes; what was wrong with the trees? They were all leafless, or next thing to it. They looked as if they had been very badly blighted, or else, as I say, as if November had somehow suddenly intruded upon midsummer. They were leafless, yellow, with branches broken down, and with dead leaves blown into heaps by the roadside. That unearthly sight in the middle of a shining July day—that was the footprint of the great storm.

Jogging along in a dogcart behind a sleepy brown mare, and beside a sleepy brown inhabitant, I began to make inquiries about it. It must have been one of the most astounding calamities that ever fell without warning on a quiet village. He supposed

[1] Daily Mail, July 7, 1897.

it were; but he hadn't seen it himself. He was at Great Something, nine miles away, and he hadn't seen a trace of it. At Little Something, a mile nearer, they had had very heavy rain, but no hail. Where we were going to they had had the hail. We should soon come to a farm where a tree had come down through the roof into the farmer's bedroom. "A hard-working man he is, too," and I recognised him from the description as the hero of many newspaper articles already.

Certainly we were coming to where they had had the hail. On the near side of the road was a thick grove of trees—oaks, elms, Scotch firs, every sort. They had had the wind unquestionably: here was a branch snapped off clean, here another torn painfully from the tough trunk and swinging from a gaping white wound, there was a tree ripped up by the roots and flung into the hedge. But it was not these wind-wounds that gave the air of chilly desolation to the whole country. It was the leaves sliced off as with a storm of bullets—the naked trees under the brilliant sun, the litter of leaves beneath them four months before their time. Summer had suddenly departed from this country, and I shivered.

Perhaps that was sentimental. But when we came to the land of the hard-working man there was a deal more than sentiment to turn the heart cold. The accommodation road was so barricaded with fallen branches that we had to drive across the pastures. We came to the farmhouse. On one side

of it every pane of glass was smashed in. The barn had lost every tile; its roof was only a cobweb of broken lattices, and the fragments of the broken tiles were heaped up like old crockery all round it. The house itself was almost as naked, and its back was broken where the tree had come down on it. On the right were two fields. One had been full of beans and the other of corn, but to-day the beans were a fallow and the corn was stubble.

In another field a torn disconsolate potato raised its head here and there out of the ruin. But where there had been mangold there was nothing—simply nothing at all. You could just trace the lines of the furrows, washed almost level by the rain. But for any trace of a crop, the field might never have been touched since last Michaelmas. It goes without saying that the hard-working farmer is quite ruined.

As we jogged on it became apparent that fallen trees had been sawn into lengths and cleared off the road; otherwise we should never have been able to drive along the road at all. Whenever we turned a corner a new bit of destruction came in sight. Some of the windows had been put in again, others were still staring empty. It had been a good time, remarked my friend, with a resolute effort to look on the bright side of things, for the glaziers. Day and night, Sunday and week-day, they had had as much work as they cared to lay putty to. But despite that cheering fact, the drive got glummer and glummer. Tiles, thatch, or slates, every roof seemed to have fared the same. Fences sprawled

all over the road, and the nettles were cut down as with a scythe. Here was a yawning gap in a fence; here a rough sheep-hurdle stuffed in to make a provisional join where a big elm had smashed the elegant railing. Fowls and ducks, pheasants and partridges, were dead by the score. Every bit of glass was ground to powder, of course; every bit of growth under it bruised to pulp. The Ingatestone Show was just coming on, and very many people were growing something for it under glass —something they had taken trouble with, going in to the little hothouse every hour to see how it was getting on. There will be no show at Ingatestone this season.

Where there had been hay ready for cutting there was now only rather ragged pasture, that looked as if it had not been properly beaten down. It was useless to try to cut the remnants with the machine, though here and there they were trying to save a little with the scythe. But it was heart-breaking work—just a few wisps of grass here and there mixed with a good many weeds; the only thing that had quite resisted the storm was the thistles. The corn was beyond even this piteous consolation. The hail had cut it off short at the ground; it was not possible to save even the straw. As for the roots, it was usually quite impossible to guess even what they had been.

Still, here and there, and almost everywhere amid the wicked ravages of Nature, you could see indomitable man at work again.

They were beginning already to do what could be done. At a gentleman's house they were hoisting up bricks and tiles to the roof. As I watched, a landau and pair came along the road. A big-nosed old lady was looking at the damage through a pair of lorgnettes; the carriage stopped, and a footman went in with a card: how sweet a thing is sympathy in the hour of adversity. More congenial was a farmhouse whose lacerated roof had been recently wrapped in rick-covers; the white-haired farmer and his three men were hoeing away at what little was left of the mangolds, as if they gave every promise of a record crop and a fat year with the rent paid and something put away in the bank. And there was a little old lady driving a fat old cob in an old park phaeton. A tree had come down over her fence a yard behind her as she passed by; yet here she was, driving alone, and flicking up the cob along the drive home as full of courage and character as ever. Nature, after all, can make man very uncomfortable, but she has never conquered him yet.

All the same, in some places there was nothing but evidence of numb despair. "There's an old man here; I don't know how much he didn't reckon to make out of his cherries;" and here was his beloved white-heart agonising over the orchard, through the hedge, and smashing its limbs to pieces on the hard road. And then, again, "There's a little man here; he'd just set up for himself a little market-garden; there's his bit of glass." Yes, there

was his bit of glass—or, rather, there was his not a single bit of glass; nothing but twisted frames, and below them the clean-stripped stalks of tomatoes. The little man had done nothing to put things straight, it seemed. For he couldn't bring his tomatoes to life again, and how was he ever to start for himself anew?

So we drove till we came out on the southward side of Ingatestone. And there everything was as usual, everything as it should be. A branch or two wrenched off now and again, but not more than you might see after many a hard blow. On one side of the road wheat, and on the other oats—splendid crops, nodding buoyantly to the breeze. Trim homesteads, with gardens full of peas and marigolds and geraniums. And not half a mile away from it that cruel devastation, that massacre of the country. One taken and the other left. Plainly it was the visitation of God—but was it any easier to bear for that?

THE DERBY.[1]

On the Epsom road early summer brings a double crop. It is not so near the London blights but that chestnut and may blossom sweetly above the hedges, kingcups in the ditches, and buttercups in the meadows. Along with them this season breeds products less clean. Between the chestnut-trees, above the may, come out festoons of grossly yellow and vermilion posters; among the buttercups on the roadside a succession of sleepy tramps readjust battered billycocks over their eyes, and heave from one elbow on to the other. Then you know that summer is come and the Derby is at hand.

On the Epsom road we associate the Derby with a string of raucous brakes in the morning and the same hideously vocal returning at night; also with entirely supererogatory niggers, who pester us as we go back to work in the quiet interval after dinner. As if we had anything to waste on niggers, we who try to live on the starveling Epsom road. Nevertheless, if we had eyes to spare for it, the days before the Derby bring quite a modern exodus in a panorama before us.

The Monday before the Epsom Summer Meeting is, as the Calendar will tell you, one of the rare holidays of the flat-racing season. Yet that day sees

[1] Daily Mail, June 1897.

a procession from London to the Downs as continuous, if not so thick, as that of the Wednesday itself. On Monday morning I found one unbroken string of vehicles and foot-passengers stretched all along the ten miles from Double Gates, Merton, which are held to be the end of London, to the Grand Stand above Epsom. They had nothing directly to do with racing, and they were not making holiday. They were just the parasites—the swing-boat people and the Aunt-Sally people, the gipsies, the hawkers, and the general cadgers that make what you might call the properties of the Derby.

Most of the vehicles were of the house-van kind that you all know, though you will not often see so many of them together. They seem rarer than they used to be, and I should have hardly thought there were so many left in England. Yet here they were in scores, plodding, plodding southward: on the road their sloping decks and soot-crusted chimneys, their dark-green or claret-coloured sides, give them something of the air of vessels. This is the ship of the road, self-contained and self-sufficient, touching here and there for supplies, yet independent of any roof or bed or stable, or any other resting-place—the true automobile. The sky for your roof-tree and the turf for your pillow—how you envy the free mariners of the road—until you look at them. Verminous hair matted over low foreheads and shifting eyes, arms that hang forward from loose shoulders like an orang-outang's, toeless and heelless boots,

every man and woman and child in shapeless clothes that obviously were made for somebody else—no: I would not be a van-dweller after all.

The van carries its all with it: the smoke from the funnel says they are cooking dinner; lashed to a tailboard is the goat that gives the milk for tea; hung out in front the caged linnet that furnishes the band during meals. Mixed up with these go parties who travel much lighter—a coaster-cart, laden with what look like bean-sticks and a length or two of canvas: that is to make a shelter wherein the family will spend the week. Then there are those who travel lighter still—the foot-passengers, some in droves of men and women together, their sole baggage a few ponies, seemingly ignorant of the difference between a summer and winter coat; some all alone, and with no more baggage than the hands in their pockets. They have no trade goods, these slouching scarecrows, no accomplishments, no qualification at all for work, and no intention in the world of doing it. Yet here they are in their thousands, shuffling towards the Derby, to beg, to borrow, to steal—all drawn by the lodestar of that hope of getting money without working for it, which is inseparable from the glorious turf.

You do not fall exactly in love with the British turf on the Epsom road the day before the Derby meeting. And when you get up on to the Downs you love it still less. You see the lower side of it, which is to the brilliancy and excitement of the day itself as loaded beer is to champagne, or the shaggy

galumphing gipsy pony to the shining thoroughbred. When you get on to the Downs you should have drawn definitely clear of London and all about it. Behind and below you trees and meadows, farms and villages, welter in black murk: the filthy exhalations of London climb up the sky like a wall. Before you stretches of rolling grass dip down to hollows, rise up to brows, all furred with rich green plantation; the sky is wistfully blue, hoping that the sunlight will tarry a little now it has come at last. The breeze that bowls over the Downs you can feel in the very bottom of your lungs, cleaning your blood. As you begin to rejoice in all this, there rises into your vision the Grand Stand and the racecourse and all the tawdry vulgarities that have sprung up in a night about them. London looks to have oozed out and laid a patch of its slimy self over the beginning of the clean country.

Already a village of vans has sat down on the gorse-bushes. At rest the vans lose their suggestion of ships. You notice, rather, the clean window curtains, and begin to think you could be a gipsy after all. Having arrived and got their pitches, half of them are making holiday before the working days begin—a simple sort of holiday, that consists, for the young, the touzle-haired, and bare-legged, in pulling each other aimlessly over the turf, but for the staider elders in lying down to sleep in the sun. You are reminded that the gipsy is a true oriental in this, that he has no bedtime.

But we must not harrow ourselves unduly. The

gipsy is happy enough in his dirt; and if you don't like it, there are comely sights on Epsom Downs, even before the Derby. Along with the gipsies have come the advanced-guard of the costers—a very different class. The coster is a happy-go-lucky fellow, and on occasion blasphemous; but he is also quick, ready, skilled in men, and especially independent. On an occasion like this, in the country, where good business is to be combined with pleasure, his womankind are a sight worth coming so far to see. They are neither shabby nor gaudy: their gowns and hats are black, their adornments are no more than clear eyes and yet clearer weather-ripened cheeks, and aprons spotlessly white and so stiffly starched that they could stand by themselves.

The sight of two such, walking casually among the streets of vans and shock-headed viragoes, cheerfully and hopelessly asking if anybody has seen a young feller with a pony-cart pass that way, is enough to sweeten the whole scene for at least a moment. But when you look at it again, you may love horses and racing as much as you like, but your heart sinks. You see all the naked apparatus of pleasure, and it looks as a circus might at noonday, or a fashionable beauty without her paint and powder. To-morrow it may not be beautiful, but at least it will be crowded, merry, roaring with enjoyment, fulfilling its purpose in life. To-day the swings and merry-go-rounds are gaunt skeletons being patched together, or heaps of garish yellow

and vermilion sticks and boards strewn on the desecrated green. The refreshment-booths are heaps of forms and trestles littered with coarse crockery. The whole place is covered with loitering scallywags, touts and tramps and beggars, the scum of England.

And the beer! Beer is good, but to see it hauled up the day before, in cold blood, is all but to turn teetotaller. Drays and drays and drays of it—beer arriving, beer disembarking, barrels of beer ranged in every tent, empty drays going back for more. Some of the loafers have begun on it already, and stagger instead of shuffling: you wonder what they will be like by Oaks night.

The whole thing is altogether too naked, you feel: it wants draping into decency. When you go down into Epsom you find it full of horse-faced stable-lads out of work, who ask you whether by any chance you have a steeplechaser that wants schooling, and, if not, whether you have a shilling. Outside the station the street is double-lined with lounging unemployed, ostensibly waiting to carry visionary bags. By every train pour in blue-chinned, hungry-faced bookmakers. The tail of yellow brakes is already standing to take to-morrow's crowds up to the course. A steady stream of horses, that have left coaches ready in their places in the enclosure or vans immobile for the week, plod wearily back for more.

This is not a sermon: I could write you just as forbidding a description of the eve of a first night,

or a Church Congress, or a Handel Festival, or the places where they make the dresses for a fancy ball. When it is dressed and at work it will look quite different, only it is never pleasant to contemplate the raw material of pleasure.

II.

What a day! We could tell in an instant that it would be glorious as soon as we put our heads outside the door on to the Epsom road.

We got in and up ostentatiously, half the household—the other half sorrowed at home, only half believing that there will be another Derby next year—and went off with the blessed knowledge that all the neighbours saw us go. They were all on the pavements, or at their windows, or the doors of their shops. They were not going, it is true, but for all that they were to enjoy their day watching the other people. That is the beauty of Derby Day, especially on the Epsom road: it is of universal enjoyment—the great festival of all the cockney year.

The costers, who inhabit our quarter in great strength, were going too. Oh yes, they were going—old man and old woman and kids and pony and moke. We started early: the coaches and brakes had not yet got so far from Piccadilly, and the road belonged—as indeed it mostly belongs all Derby Day—to the poor. But none of them—not the tradesman in his market-cart lined with Wind-

sor chairs, not even the fair ladies you divine inside the darkling furniture-vans—can touch the coster.

He is the only man of his class who always takes the whole family on the jaunt, and they are the only kind of family that knows how to turn itself out. The well-fed Polly or Neddy in the shafts, the harness picked out with ribbons or bunches of lilac, the long, new-painted, highly-variegated cart that balances on its axletree like a liner at sea, the old man's twinkling eyes and weather-reddened cheeks, the old woman in crimson velvet or lilac silk sitting so bolt upright, so queenly under her diadem of feathers, the tiny boys in their square-tailed grey coats and their square capable faces,—oh yes, give me the coster on Derby Day. There is nothing like him outside London, and nothing inside either.

We roll out between the familiar meadows. On the roadside rest foot-passengers; a steady stream of them sets all along the road, the British working man walking down. He looks twice the man he does on other days—striding along, holding himself upright, smoking his old pipe. Who grudges him the buttercups and the sweet hawthorn and the cloudless blue—already filtered so clean from the reek of London? What a day!

North Cheam, the Queen Victoria's Head, Ewell, Epsom — every soul on the pavements — Ashley Road—and we are there already. Just in time to get the carriage into the front row, and get two good hours from the first race. But that is all the better. There are those among us who have never

seen a bookmaker, and wonder why showers of leaflets drop from a still sky: two hours fly as ten minutes in such initiations. But meanwhile, and from the first moment to the last, what a sight!

The day before the meeting the course was an abomination, an outrage on the clear sky and the lift of the Downs and the far-off blotches of woodland. But to-day London has come out and draped the indecency, and it is all pure holiday. The shabby vans and shaggy ponies and shock-headed women and children now fall into their proper places as the framework of the world's greatest fair. The Hill, which on Monday was a stack of tawdry bits of timber and dirty canvas, to-day, upholstered with people, has become a very palace of pleasure. It stands up over against you with the white and blue and scarlet signs of the silver ring, the red and yellow of the swings and merry-go-rounds; the colours are just as garish as they ever were, but now they are only the embroidery on a spreading cloak of black-coated Londoners.

You might think that the whole city had migrated on to the Downs. You wonder what London is like at this moment: is it possible that many poor wretches are left there breathing the air through that respirator of smoke? Here, although the dust is in your nostrils, you still smell the may through it. At least, there are thousands on thousands enjoying that smell to-day, and you rejoice; for the Derby is one of those blessed days when everybody wants everybody to enjoy himself.

By now the stands opposite us are black with people; the whole course is black as far as Tattenham Corner, and beyond; wherever you look is a thick black carpet pricked with myriads of pin-point faces. It is a huge city, almost a nation in itself. Only this is a city where everybody can see the sky—a whole hemisphere of it: we may thank the wisdom of our fathers for giving London an institution like the Derby. The Prince of Wales is under the clock under the royal standard; the dustman is on the course below, brushing against the frock-coat of a Cabinet Minister. And they are all enjoying themselves, and enjoying the enjoyment of the others.

However, we came to see races—and now the limber two-year-olds are stretching their long legs in the canter; a few minutes and they come thundering past us home. Sloan wins! and nobody grudges it him; yet, if it were an omen! Surely Providence will never allow a French colt with an American rider to win our Derby! We lost heavily on the first race, and worse on the second; yet on the Derby none of us really cared to bet at all. It was almost too dear and important an issue for betting—almost as bad as insuring your mother's life.

Now comes the bell, and that ever-wonderful scene of clearing the course—the black river that dries up in five minutes at the hand-wave of a few score of men in blue coats and helmets. Another wait—and here come the horses. They walk past, and then canter back—Holocauste first, looking a

bit of a slug, with Sloan riding him as if he were a bicycle; then the rest of the shining ones; and last Flying Fox, with what a reach, what an all-conquering stride, and a man on his back that sits and has hands left to ride with. They disappear, and then we wait and wait and wait. Time after time the silk jackets break away behind us and file slowly back. Won't it be all in favour of the slug? Wasn't Flying Fox tearing a little at his bit in the canter? Quarter-past three, half-past—off: no, false start again—twenty to, quarter to—ah! A breathless interval, and there they sweep over the hill, well together. Now they are shut out again; but now they are tearing round the corner. Little spots of colour are sliding down the hill; now jerking furiously up it. Nearer and nearer, bigger and bigger; the earth trembles; the wave of colour surges up, and—yellow, Flying Fox, Morning Cannon, by all that's glorious! Running under the whip, with some of the fire out of his action, but still that conquering stride. A yellow ray across the eyes—a flash of the jockey's square resolute face as he looks round an instant, and then—ah-h! Our Derby is our Derby still.

Somehow there seem to be fewer Frenchmen than there were a minute ago. Yet we can all spare a pang for a good horse come to grief and for a plucky rider beaten, who yet weighs out next race. But to hold up a horse round Tattenham Corner, we tell ourselves with great sageness, you need to sit on his back.

More races: we lose our money quite cheerfully, for the country is saved, and our best horseman has won his Derby. Under the unaccustomed sun we all sit and are happy, till suddenly—oh, alas!—the last race is run, and we must go home. You would say that this black garment of people could never be pulled off the Downs. Coaches and landaus and coster-carts start and start and start; yet there isn't even room made for us to put in our horses. The broad black river in the course flows and flows, but it never seems to get thinner. The truth is that nobody cares to go away: the evening air and the evening sun and the evening scents are all kisses.

We get away at last. It appears that the tin trumpet is this year's foolishness for coming home, with paper sunshades for yourself and—if you are a coster and your beast is a friend—for him also. When you have been to the Derby the tin trumpet sounds quite passable. We observe a good many stoppages by the way. Many of them are near public-houses, certainly, but not nearly all. The truth is that the Derby is a day of days, and nobody is in a hurry to get it over. Hundreds stop just to get a little more green hedgerow: the pony has a feed, and they sit quite happily on the cooling grass. It is not the racing entirely, and it is not wholly the air and the sun and the green, nor the blending of all classes, nor the lunch, nor the beer. It is all together. It is just the Derby—London's day of pure enjoyment. What a day!

THE CESAREWITCH.[1]

Cambridge is a quiet world to itself, with its grey cloisters, silent spires, pale preoccupied professors. Walk fifty yards up the Cambridge platform and you come out on another world, as utterly apart and to itself, and utterly different. The inhabitants of this world wear overcoats down to their heels, instead of gowns; their faces are ruddy, or by'r Lady inclining to purple; they are puckered round the eyes; pink cards peep out of their pockets, and sporting newspapers cascade over their knees; they smoke large cigars incessantly, and they are not silent. What they tell you may or may not be what they wish you to believe, but they have certainly no hesitation in telling it. They are not afraid to talk their own shop, these dwellers in the world of racing; what but racing should a man talk? Nor yet are they afraid of talking to each other; the world of racing, popularly supposed to be the preserve of a corrupted aristocracy, is really a far more genuine democracy than any trade union. The precise mannerly gentleman in the corner of the carriage is explaining that he had a good win at Kempton with The Nailer, but that it would have been better if his trial horse had not cut it at the finish; it disconcerts him not a bit that there is

[1] Daily Mail, October 14, 1897.

nobody to tell the tale to but the flashy, h-dropping professional backer. Only he prefers to talk of the past of his stable rather than of its future. The rest take pencils and make marks on their cards, and little sums on the margins of their newspapers, brows lined with anxious thought. For the Cesarewitch is a piece of serious business—business to be buckled to. The great day comes just as you realise that the flat-racing season will not last for ever; and if you are to come out on the right side you had better get to work at once. The air of Newmarket is tonic to the stomach and disinfectant in the lungs; but it is plain that to-day we are not going to Newmarket for the fresh air. The Cesarewitch is not a public holiday like the Derby, nor a fashionable reunion like the Ascot Cup. It is hardly to be called even sport, any more than a picture-sale is to be called art. Many go there for enjoyment rather than for money; but it is a very specialised form of enjoyment. For the rest it is just business—hard, profit-and-loss business.

It is so when we come out, under the lukewarm October sun, on to the rolling green of the Heath. It spreads out, billowing right and left, like a sea. But every man, on foot, in cabs, on horseback, is heading towards the grey island that rises in the middle with white benches jutting out from it—the stands and the rails. There the crowd gathers and blackens—dense at the centre, thinning at the fringes. The Cesarewitch course is like an island in the world of complex England—once more a life

apart to which a point in the odds is more than the rise in bread, and the state of The Rush's legs more than the fortunes of empires. Notice that there is no rowdyism to-day, nobody changing hats with elect donahs, no tomfoolery, no quarrelling, no drunkenness. The crowd is small, by comparison, but it is select—though it does not always look it. Everybody has come on business, and what is more, everybody knows his business.

Only a dozen ladies in the paddock—and they are calculating their bets, and wondering what Manton means about Jacobus. There are peers, and there are stable-boys; but they are all equal here, and all serious. They are not rushing about to see this horse or that horse; they know all about them already. A couple of two-year-olds, their elaborate clothing and eye-holes suggesting a diver's dress, are lashing out in the true two-year-old form—lanky skittish beasts, hardly seeming to feel the ground under them, yet with all sorts of potentialities of beauty and power; they remind you rather of misses from a boarding-school. Nobody takes any notice of such except the baby boy perched on the filly's back—his feet don't nearly reach to the stirrups, but he shortens or lengthens the reins with the dignity of one who is going to win the Derby in 1907—and the careful lad who has got to keep some hundred pounds' worth of horse from the destruction which it is trying to rush upon. But never mind all that; to business and into the Ring.

When you turn the corner of the subway from the paddock and begin to climb the steps, the noise of a furious riot breaks on you suddenly. Of course you have heard it often enough, but it never ceases to be a wonder of nature that so few men can make so ear-splitting a babel. When you get up the steps you are like to be hurled back again; there is little enough room to stroll round the Ring on Cesarewitch day. The profession of bookmaking must be a prosperous one, even in these anti-gambling days; else why are they so ostentatiously well nourished, so ostentatiously sound in limb and wind? "Five to one bar one! Ten to one bar two! Evens the feeyuld!" It makes the unaccustomed head go round, of course; but did it never occur to you what a combination of gifts the bookmaker must possess to make a living at all? Look at the great big men in check ulsters and cloth caps: Jones & Brown is the firm, and each wears his name as a scarf-pin in the touching belief, apparently, that somebody cares which is Jones and which is Brown. Jones is bellowing the odds like a bull. But all the time he has got to keep one eye on his customers and another on the columns of figures wherein Brown is recording the bets, and an eye in the side of his head on the unshaven little man in a broken hat, who is semaphoring signals with his arms, and another in the back of his head on the white flag down the broad course, which will fall at the start. Also, he has got to hear his clients speak over his own voice, to catch the

rival bellow of old Jim Jackson—who, surely, must know something—laying a point more, and to keep the state of his book in his head all the while. A very remarkable man is Jones, and if he gets my sovereign—and of course he does—he deserves it.

"Off!" "Unned pound I name the winnah!" "Fifties Schomberg!" "Pullin' Watts out of the saddle!" "Don't be too sure of that, my son"—and therewith the two horses come thudding past, and one jockey is waving his whip like a windmill, and Count Schomberg's resolute stride lengthens, but slackens, and that's all over. Say half a minute of fierce excitement for a quarter of an hour's deafness, and as much money as you may like to spend on it—only, who shall say it is not worth it?

Now "On the Cæsar-witch I'm betting; win, and one, two, three." We must go over on to the hill to see that. The hill is just about as much a hill as the ditch is a ditch, or the bushes bushes. To the profane eye the hill is a gentle slope, and the ditch a bank, and of the bushes the less said the better; yet they are not the less sacred for that. Gorgeous young men, in boots you might shave in; ladies in clinging habits; sharp, clean-shaven trainers; breeched and gaitered stable-boys, even sharper-faced than their masters; members of Parliament, and touts out at the knee,—all stand in the keen air and wait. Wait, wait, and wait. You can imagine what is happening at the post—the two or three horses who don't mean to wait for anybody; the long line of brilliant jackets, now advancing, now

breaking line and turning back again; the patient starter speaking to the jockeys like a father with "Go back, there," and "Don't trot forward now." Then "Off" again—Heaven knows how everybody is silent and solemn in a moment that roared so loud before. Then another wait. Then far away a little patch coming nearer — only coming nearer slowly. Nearer yet, and now you can see they are a line of horses with a streak of variegated but indistinguishable colour above them. Now you can see them like a charge of cavalry. Not one a foot ahead of another, as it seems. The Rush! Was not that The Rush drawing out as they were behind the Bushes and into the Dip. A minute, an hour; are they never coming into sight again? Then suddenly they flash up—no charge of cavalry now, but streaming into view like a garden of many flowers, all scattered. The fierce yell comes up with them to the thunderous beat of the hoof. "The Rush, The Rush wins!" But from just behind "The Rush" shoots out something else. A green-and-white sleeve lashing madly, a turquoise-and-fawn body shooting securely ahead of it. "Merman! Merman! Merman!" And that's over.

The horses are blowing and sobbing as the jockeys slide off down their streaming steaming sides. Little boys with chubby cheeks and little boys with the faces of wizened old men, they take up their tiny saddles and go off to the weighing-room. "Thank you so much; and I do so hope you backed him," says Mrs. Langtry. The Cesare-

witch is run, and our real day's work is done. On the Ring has fallen a great silence. Over the thousands of faces, fine-lined or coarse, powdered or pimpled, settles the vague look of abstraction, of calculation. Business is over; how do we come out? Thus the little world of racing and its little town in Cambridgeshire has had its Afridi campaign and its shipbuilding strike. Its bit of history is made for to-day. It walks away pondering over the momentous event, with little disconnected scraps of talk, such as, " 'E come up the 'ill well." Everybody knows who 'e is; how could anybody be thinking of anybody else?

TWO HOSPITALS.

I.

OUT-PATIENTS' DAY.[1]

In the surgeon's room — half underground, half lighted, hardly ventilated, smaller than your drawing-room—lounged a couple of dozen students. Sitting on Windsor chairs or standing in the best of the light, patient but listless, half fear, half hope, were about a dozen working men. Along the dim passages leaned half a dozen more; beyond in the dim waiting-hall, sitting on rows of benches like children in school, were perhaps a couple of hundred people—women in fringes and aprons, women with scraggy babies under their shawls, dockers in corduroys, tan-faced sailors, Jew tailors in reach-me-downs, some shepherding pale, bright-eyed children, some shepherding friends who could speak no English. Beyond in the larger, lighter, medical waiting-hall were perhaps twice as many again of the same sort. The place smelt of helplessness in all of its forms, whether ignorance, poverty, or vice, and especially disease.

It was an afternoon's work of the London Hospital. If you will take a map of London and stick a pin into the site of the hospital, just opposite the

[1] Daily Mail, June 28, 1898.

Metropolitan Railway's Whitechapel and Mile-End stations, you will see why it is the rendezvous of misery. Westward to Aldgate, southward by the docks to the Thames, north and east just as far as you like—all round it spreads a wilderness of undistinguished streets. Houses line the streets like peas in a pod; men and women and children swarm and fester in them like maggots in a pea. There are no ladies and gentlemen: everybody is poor, and must work or starve. The fog and the dirt and the straining work breed diseases most abundantly just in the people who are helpless against them. Then, when they must mend or starve, they come to the London Hospital.

The surgeon strode in—an apparition of great size and strength, strained to its extreme, of a calm keen face, and hands both fine and powerful. In less than one minute he was in his place, the students were in theirs, and among the patients hope began to get the upper hand of fear. From his desk the surgeon took up one of many forms with writing upon it. He read out a name from the top; a dumpy man stepped into the semicircle and sat down. Instead of looking at him the surgeon began to read the history and symptoms of his case from the paper.

Seconds are precious in the London Hospital, and you very soon saw that none is wasted. Yet it occurred to the mind that the surgeon could have come to the point quicker by looking at the man himself. But that would be attending to only one-

half the hospital's work. Out-patients must be relieved; but also students must be taught. You in Mayfair, or Hampstead, or Clapham, may imagine that the London Hospital is nothing to you. You are callous to a great deal of misery, if you do, and very short-sighted in supposing that half your fellow-citizens can putrefy without rotting the whole; also, in point of fact, you are very wrong. When you are ill, where does your doctor come from? He reads his books at Cambridge, maybe; but where did he see a scalpel? Where do they make doctors? Where but in the place which gives most chance of learning diseases? You may pay a couple of guineas in Harley Street whenever you have a headache; but none the less you, and all of us, have a direct debt to pay to the hospitals which provide healers for rich as well as poor.

Each patient, therefore, had been tackled by a student, and he had written down his diagnosis. The surgeon read it off, and then, ruling out irrelevancies, recapitulated the four or five important factors. "Whose case?" "Mine," said a boy in blue serge. "What's your diagnosis?" The boy answered something I did not understand. The surgeon agreed, but distinguished. Which breed of the particular disease was it? and why? The gentleman in question was suffering from a kind of eruption on the chin; and I gathered that the student rather plunged in his reply, alleging that the patient caught it from his barber's razor. "How do you know that?" inquired the remorseless man of

science. There was not very much doubt in his own mind that the student was right; but moral certainty does not do for surgical education. Hairs were plucked out of the offending skin and dipped in *liquor potass* out of a bottle, and put into the microscope. Meanwhile the next case was called.

The next case was a man with a cyst behind his ear: being sent away to have it cut out, he expressed a preference for chloroform over laughing-gas, presumably as being the more aristocratic anæsthetic of the two; but laughing-gas was what he got. The next was a docker, who had fallen on to his knee; the next a leg which required massage. He ought to have got it twice a day, but the hospital can't afford it, and of course he couldn't afford it himself. Then a gentleman who had got it into his head that he mustn't eat vegetables, and had consequently come out purple over the skin. Then a gentleman who, being told to lead a horse, had preferred to ride it: he had never been across a horse before, and after an hour and a half, and a cropper on the head, was surprised that he went very stiff. Then a foreman from a chemical factory: he had been working with mercury, and his teeth were on the point of falling out of his jaw.

Then another, and another, and another—one done, next come on: a relentless tale of ignorance and labour and drink and vice. You saw the half-innocent sins of twenty years ago come grinning up with their punishment; you saw perky-faced children wincing for the half-remembered debauches

of their fathers. It was humiliating to manhood, and yet it was heroic. For in each distress human knowledge and skill fought on undiscouraged against human folly and weakness. The piercing reek of iodoform, the unflinching scalpel, the revealing microscope, the sterilised tube to be examined for bacteria, the ghostly Röntgen photograph—in one afternoon you could see every weapon plied incessantly in the heroic unequal combat.

For the combat is terribly unequal. Fighting disease in the London Hospital is like fighting a big bully in a strait-waistcoat. You saw it plainly when the first batch of patients had been despatched and the second string came in. They were told off one apiece to a student, as before, and everything had to be done in the one narrow half-lit room. In a minute it was a jungle of human bodies —half-naked men, fathers stripping misshapen children, students dodging under swollen arms and stepping over varicose veins to get at the case they could hardly touch for the crowd and hardly see for the dusk.

Everything inside makes against good work, as everything outside strives to stifle good results; yet the good work goes on undismayed. Face after face that came in timid and heavy went out light. Out of its cramped poverty the hospital gave freely and kept back nothing. "I haven't come provided," said a lame girl who was ordered to bed. "You don't need to be provided—we provide," was the superb reply.

The evening wound up with a couple of opera-

tions. Faithful accounts of operations do not suit all palates, so we will glide over these lightly. A great surgeon operating is like a great general fighting an action. Staff and guns, infantry and cavalry —chloroformist and dressers and nurses—each unit in its place, knowing its own work and doing it to the second, all working swiftly and smoothly together to the one end, and the one mind controlling every movement. The inanimate-animate body on the wheeled table, the reek of the antiseptics, the clink of the instruments, snatched up or replaced, in the disinfectant bath, the brief words of command, the hush, the hands that fly to and fro, over and under, conveying the next thing needed, the firm, accurate hand that carves and saws, then covers up and heals,—these are the master-marvels of all the hospital's beneficence. A child's knee fresh opened, freed from diseased bone, and then fastened together again in its right shape, for all the world like mending a wooden doll.

If the disease is a scalding shame to our human nature, the hand and eye and brain that heal are a halo of glory.

II.

IN THE THEATRE.[1]

The theatre was full of the piercing smell of iodoform. About its lowest tiers lounged a dozen students.

[1] Daily Mail, April 9, 1899.

On the floor stood a doctor, grey-bearded, motionless, hands thrust into his overcoat pockets. Everybody else on the floor was all strained attention and swift movement—the two elder students behind the tables with bright steel instruments in small tanks of water-made antiseptics; the nurse at the table with the sponges and basins of water—some clear, some pink, some scarlet; the probationer at the sink and tap; the nursing sisters handing things to the surgeons; the two surgeons themselves, shirt-sleeved, arms bare to the elbow, covered up in big white aprons.

Between their swift movements you could see lying on the slab in the centre a human body. Man or woman you could not say, for over the whole face was a large leather cap, and growing out of it a brown bladder like an empty football; the chloroformist held it tight over mouth and nose. Suddenly the bald-headed surgeon, stepping aside, lets in a glimpse of an amputated arm.

There hung from it a bunch of what looked like little steel skewers. These were the clips with which they catch up and close the ends of the severed vessels. The arm was off above the elbow, and the second half of the operation was in rapid, almost stealthy, progress.

You could hardly follow the surgeon's hand as he took a bit of salmon-gut from the watching attendant; before you saw it was whipped round an artery and had tied it up. The clip was off and passed back to the hand waiting to receive it. One

after another the clips came back into their tank. Then the surgeon's brisk word of command broke the dead silence: "Hot lotion," he said, without looking up. It was there, ready, in the slight sister's hand; in a second, as by jugglery, it was in the surgeon's, and being passed over the wound. Then the flaps of skin were drawn.

"Iodoform"—and by another hardly perceptible piece of legerdemain a pepper-castor was shaking yellow powder on the wound.

"Bandages"—and they had sprung up in the sister's hand, and in a second the light-coloured antiseptic dressings were being strapped on hastily, firmly, with exact precision. Now you saw the leather cap was off the face: it was a young beardless man, very pale, rolling his head over on the pillow, with a twitter of returning life, very ill from the ether.

But before he had time to realise what had happened the maimed arm was strapped to his side; a door had opened noiselessly, and a bed had trundled in; the bundle of blankets was lifted swiftly but gently—by two attendants catching him up on the same side, so as not to jar the shattered body—back on to its bed. In an instant the bed was away and the door was shut. And, looking round, you saw that all the paraphernalia, the tables and instruments, sponges and basins, had disappeared too.

It was like a dream of magic, a fairy-tale of the end of the nineteenth century, to come in from the

everyday bustle of London and find such wonders being wrought in the midst of it. The work was so silent, so quick, so self-possessed; it seemed to move by itself smoothly, infallibly, as if those engaged in it had ceased to be separate men and women. No hitch, no hesitation, no pause; everything in its exact place, everything at its exact time.

Almost before you have had time to wonder, another bed has come in by another door. The patient on it is a woman, white-haired, seventy years old. But her face is placid and quite unafraid as she is lifted on to the operating-table; indeed, there is nothing visible to frighten. But as she is laid down the noiseless miracle begins again. Suddenly the instruments and attendants are all in their places again. The patient is breathing in anodyne insensibility from the cup and bladder. The surgeon, tall, grey, bushy-browed, his long hands a model of delicacy linked with strength, is explaining the case to the students: it is cancer, and he has authority to cut it away. It is part of the miracle—only by now you have ceased to be surprised—that he has finished his explanation exactly at the moment the patient is ready for him. He steps up to the body, gives a keen glance at the stain on the arm, touches it. "Scalpel," he says, without looking up, and the keen blade is instantly in his hand.

His hand is travelling over the arm—but surely not cutting? The flesh seems to divide before it,

so exquisitely edged is the knife, so firm and true the fingers and wrist. Little streams suddenly well up and trickle down the arm. "Sponge," and a sponge has appeared and swept them away. "Clip," and a clip has glided from its tank, and has stopped the cut vein. Gradually—it is only seconds, but they are packed with the interest of hours—there grows a deep red gash behind the ever-moving scalpel. It moves a shade more slowly now; it is picking its way among arteries, and a hair's-breadth to left or right may mean death. No sound but the sharp orders and the perpetual gush of water from the tap where the probationer is emptying the reddened water and refilling the bowl for the clean sponges. There remains the crimson chasm fringed with clips. Now comes what we have seen before: the clips come off one by one as the blood-vessels are tied up; the lotion washes all clean; the gash, which looked as if half the arm had been cut out, closes up to a natural form and size. And as that dimly waking woman is whisked away, the surgeon, calling for a basin, and passing it round, resumes his remarks on cancer.

The next case is cancer too, only it is cancer in the mouth and jaw. Cheek and jaw are to be cut away: to keep the man alive yet insensible the while, he must have chloroformed air pumped into his lungs. The chloroformist has got a long tube with a bladder at the end. The sponges in this case are small, and held on long clips. He is an obscene-looking old man, his face dyed with drink, and

two front teeth gone. As he is strapped down, the sweet sticky smell of chloroform begins to conquer the iodoform; it is being sprinkled on to the cloth over his face. As it gets hold of him he starts muttering in a thick drunken tone, then struggles, and tries to sit up, while the mutter swells into a half-articulate curse. But now he is ready, and "Scalpel," calls the surgeon. He bends over, and you see the blade gleam. Again it is not like cutting. The man is sobbing and moaning now, his cries rising and falling as if with the violence of the pain, though he cannot really feel anything.

As the moan rises louder to a muffled yell, the surgeon pauses to let the chloroformed cloth lie over the mouth for a moment; then comes the time to cut the bone. The long keen saw is so fine that but for the grinding of the bone you might have thought it a simple steel rod.

Everybody is working now for the man's life; the lithe swiftness of movement is almost dazzling. Left hands and right hands seem each to be thinking for themselves; the sponges are handed with breathless haste: the sister slips them in, now over a shoulder, now under an arm, to the ready hand that must not wait half a second; surgeon, assistant, and chloroformist, whoever has a hand to spare, nips up the sponge and plunges it down the subject's throat. Then the shining shears plunge in too and grip the bone; the veins stand out on the surgeon's hands as he forces the sharp blades to-

gether with every ounce of his strength. Crack—from somewhere inside.

Then another grip, another wrench, another crack; "Basin"—and the lump of bone comes away. It is over now; the clips sticking up out of the throat disappear one by one. Then the deft healing hand closes the wound, and the face is a face again.

You go out dazed—quite lost in wonder and admiration. You did not expect to see your fellows cut up alive with excitement and enthusiasm. Yet enthusiasm it is. If what you have seen did no possible good to anybody, it would still be unspeakably noble as the highest exercise of human science and handicraft. Being also the life-saving it is, how can any adjective say enough to praise it? You can only repeat, "A miracle, a miracle," and wonder whether it looks more diabolical or angelic—diabolical in its superhuman accomplishment, angelic in its superhuman beneficence.

APPENDIX

FROM THE 'LADYSMITH LYRE.'

EDITORIAL NOTE.

The following extracts from the "Ladysmith Lyre," that pathetic trophy of indomitable cheerfulness, have been included by the desire of many friends. The interest of them is personal, since they are of the last words which George Steevens wrote, and one of character, the circumstances of their writing considered, and it is thought that for such a reason, over and above their intrinsic merit, their inclusion will be welcomed.

THE WAR OF KINGS.

Mahabir Thapa is an expert in war. From his infancy he has engaged in the destruction of mankind. At his mother's breast he strangled his twin brother. Before he tramped down to Gorakhpur to enlist as a "rifleman" of the *Kampani Bahadur* he had survived four divorce cases; and every one knows a Gurkha co-respondent must be well versed in war thus to clear his character. I first saw Mahabir in the Swat Valley. He was a little scrap

of a Havildar in the IV. Gurkhas, and was standing outside his colonel's tent picking the beard hairs out of a ghastly trophy in heads. On the previous evening the colonel had offered three rupees to the man who would effectually silence a "sniper" who had pitched Martini bullets into the camp with persistent monotony. Mahabir had earned the three rupees, and had brought in the Pathan's head as a proof of good faith. The next time that he tumbled across my path, I found him a smartly turned out Jemadar attached to the Gurkha scouts. In this service he had ample opportunity of improving his knowledge of war. Therefore, when to my surprise I found him in Ladysmith, masquerading as a dooley-bearer, I appealed to him for an expert opinion.

"What do you think of it, Sirdar?"

"Sahib, I have seen many wars, but this is before all wars—this is the war of kings. Cannon on this side, cannon on that side, was there ever such a war? Surely this is *Badshai ke larai*."

"Come along, Sirdar, come to my room and we will talk it all over."

I took him to my quarters and placed a Mauser carbine and a brandy in his hands.

"What do you think of this, Sirdar?" He turned the weapon over half-a-dozen times, tried the breech action, pressed down the magazine spring, and then threw the rifle on the bed. "Sahib, it is good, but the war is bad. This war is like a shikar party given by Jung Bahadur, a State shikar

party. Here are elephants, armies of beaters, tents, food in plenty, music, fireworks, and *nautches;* but no kills, except such game as the keepers had orders to slay overnight and had strewn in the path of the elephants, that the guests might be pleased. Even as this is this war. It is the war of kings, not of men. When men go forth to war, or sport, they gird up their loins, pack food on their backs, and make no noise. The less noise the more war."

"Then do you approve of this show?"

"Sahib, it is magnificent, a great game; men watch for the smoke of the guns, then run into holes and laugh and clap their hands. There they sit in safety, counting the loss and gain with a thousand rupees in the mouth of each gun. Why spend this money and do no good? If we run to holes, will not the *dushman* do likewise, will he not laugh and also clap his hands? For one hundred rupees will a Gurkha serve the *Sirkar* for a year. If you had the services of one Gurkha for one year for every round that you have fired during the last month, you would now stand possessed of every gun in the world. With Lucas Sahib, and Bruce Sahib, and fifty men from my *pultan*, the General Sahib would in one week have in his verandah such a pile of breechblocks that the doors would not open, and we should have painted them all red to prevent rust."

"But this is a white man's war."

Mahabir Thapa put down his glass slowly. His eyes clearly said, "Thank God for that!" but his

answer was, "I cannot understand; it is the war of kings, I am but a man."

How could he understand? What did he know of Staff College strategy and modern tactics? Military history, depression range-finders, telescopic sights, and chess-board calculations meant nothing to the man who, given half a company of little heathens in grass shoes, was prepared to dismantle the whole of the artillery of the South African Republics.

27th November 1899.

AN INTERCEPTED LETTER.

The following letter was discovered the other day amongst the bags which were sent back to us, not having succeeded in getting through the Boer lines:—

To Mr. Smith, Esq., *Collector Sahib, Mozuffernugger, N.W.P., India.*

Nov. 10, 1899.

Most Honoured Sir,—Your humble servant begs to inquire after your egregious and illustrious health. And as above poor petitioner wishes to bring this my humble petition for kind consideration of above. Since after subsequent many days arrival in this place called Lady Smith, undersigned being loyal subject but of timid nature, has suffered cannon-balls, and many long toms for these many

days, and since few days have suffered sickness with pains and spasms.

Sir, I am not military soldier, and am in constant terror of balls as above. Undersigned would therefore pray that your most noble opulence would bring kind consideration to bear, and bring relief on your honour's most humble and beseeching petitioner, as since many days I am hiding in hole, and dare not make exit from same. Please to give order that I return to your honour's service without delay, for which act of kindness grovelling petitioner will ever pray, as in duty bound, for your honour's long life and prosperity.—Ever your most humble and obedient servant,

Sheo Narain Das, *Baboo.*

30th November 1899.

THE RELIEF OF LADYSMITH.

Reprinted from the 'Times' of December 5th, 2099.

A WONDERFUL DISCOVERY.

The eminent German archæologist, Dr. Poompschiffer, has recently contributed to science the most interesting discovery of the century. It will be remembered that the learned professor started in the spring on a tour of exploration among the buried cities of Natal. When last heard of, in October, he had excavated the remains of Maritzburg and Estcourt, and was cutting his way through the

dense primeval forests on the banks of the Tugela. By cable yesterday came intelligence of even more sensational finds. Briefly, Dr. Poompschiffer has rediscovered the forgotten town of Ladysmith. Crossing the Tugela, the intrepid explorer pushed northward. The dense bush restricted his progress to three miles a day. On the third day Poompschiffer noticed strange booming sounds frequently repeated; none of his party could guess what they were, and curiosity ran high. On the sixth day the mystery was explained. The party came suddenly upon a group of what were at first taken for a species of extinct reptile, but which the profound learning of Poompschiffer enabled him to recognise as

THE LAST SURVIVALS OF THE PREHISTORIC BOERS.

Their appearance was almost terrifying. They were all extremely old. Their white beards had grown till they trailed beneath their feet, and it was the custom of the field-cornets to knee-halter each man at night with his own beard to prevent him from running away. Their clothes had fallen to pieces with age, but a thick and impenetrable coating of dust and melinite kept them warm. Their occupation was as quaint as their appearance. They were firing obsolete machines, conjectured to be the cannon of the ancients, in the direction of a heap of cactus-grown ruins. That heap of ruins was the fabled fortress of Ladysmith.

Students of history will remember the Boer war of 1899, from which public attention was distracted by the great War Office strike. The learned will also remember at a later period, after the closing of that office, the controversy in our columns on the question whether Ladysmith existed or not, which the general voice of experts finally decided in the negative. It is now proved that so-called savants of that rude age were mistaken. Not only did Ladysmith exist, not only was it besieged, but up to the day before yesterday

THE SIEGE OF LADYSMITH WAS STILL GOING ON.

The site of the town at first appeared uninhabited. But when Poompschiffer commenced excavating he came, to his amazement, upon signs of old workings at a depth of only a few feet below the surface. For an instant, he tells us, he thought some other antiquarian had been before him. Next moment some creature blundered along the tunnel into his very arms. It was secured and brought into the light. It was the last inhabitant of Ladysmith.

It was apparently one of the children born since the beginning of the siege, and was about a hundred years old. From living in underground holes it was bent double, and quite blind. It appeared unable to speak, only repeating constantly, in a crooning voice, the syllables, "Weeskee, weeskee," which Poompschiffer was unable to translate. The professor was anxious to secure this unique speci-

men for the Kaiser William Museum of Antiquities, at Berlin. But the moment it was removed from Ladysmith it began to pine away. Having never known any state of life but bombardment, it was terrified by the absence of artillery-fire. Time after time it attempted to escape to its native shells. Poompschiffer endeavoured to maintain life by artificial bombardment, letting off crackers in its ear, and pelting it with large stones. But all was in vain: the extraordinary creature was not deceived, and in a few hours, with a last despairing wail of "Weeskee," it expired through sheer terror at the safety of its surroundings.

5th December 1899.

THE END.

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